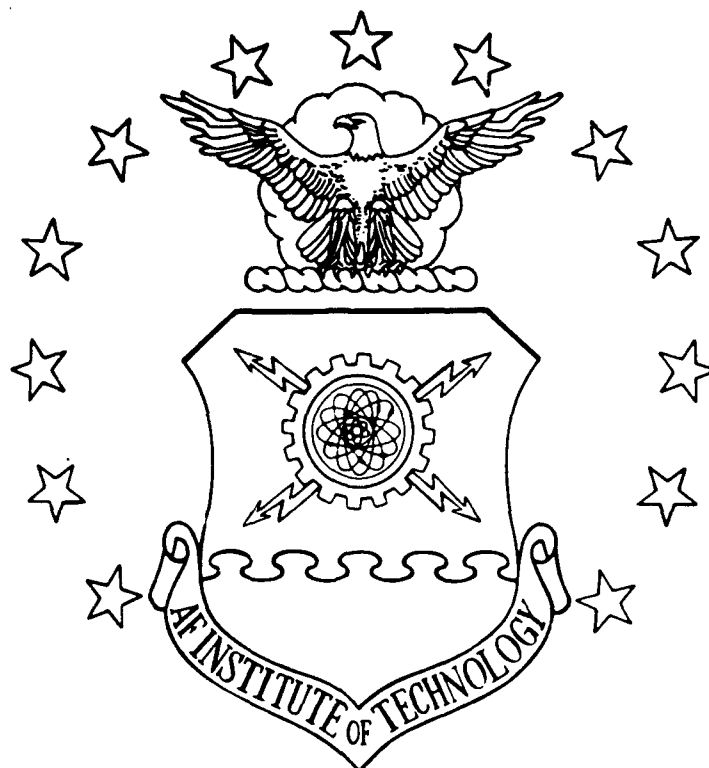


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APPLICATION OF DECISION-MAKING MODELS
TO FOREIGN POLICY:
A CASE STUDY OF
THE REFLAGGING OF KUWAITI OIL TANKERS

THESIS

Michael T. Rehg, Captain, USAF

AFIT/GLM/LSM/90S-45

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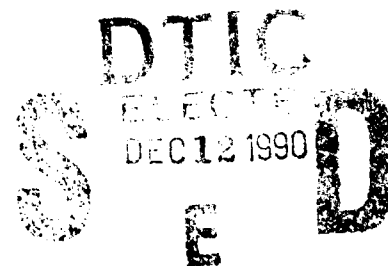
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APPLICATION OF DECISION-MAKING MODELS
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A CASE STUDY OF
THE REFLAGGING OF KUWAITI OIL TANKERS

THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the School of Systems and Logistics
of the Air Force Institute of Technology
Air University
In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science in Logistics Management

Michael T. Rehg
Captain, USAF

September 1990

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Preface

This research was undertaken to apply some well-known models of how foreign policy is made to an event in American history, to better understand how and why our nation acts. Although political science has always held my interest, I had not read much on this subject prior to the start of the research. This thesis was a culmination of pent-up desires to become more knowledgeable of American politics and current events. I chose the reflagging of the Kuwaiti oil tankers because I had followed the event fairly closely when it occurred, and it was a recent example of foreign policy decision-making, but not so recent that sources would be hard to find on the subject. It also occurred in a region of the world which has been historically volatile, and the focus of recent American foreign policy. I had no inkling that near the termination of this research, in August 1990, the Persian Gulf would again be the focus of not only American foreign policy but world attention, when the forces of Iraq attacked and overthrew the Government of Kuwait. The Iraqi invasion provides students of political science the opportunity to study a recent event in American foreign policy-making. The differences between the reactions of the Bush administration in 1990 and the Reagan administration in 1987 would be enlightening on foreign policy decision-making. Hopefully this thesis will be of value to anyone studying American foreign policy-making in this region.

I am deeply indebted to my thesis advisor, Dr. Craig Brandt, for taking on an apprentice in political science, and guiding him to the real issues. I thank him for giving me the freedom to grope and grasp with my own ideas, and force me to come to my own conclusions. Although a difficult process, it is a necessary one for real learning to occur and should be the basis for thesis research in this program.

I want to especially thank my wife Denise, for showing me what was really important during the last 15 months, and remotivating me when I had lost sight of the goal. All that I have achieved I owe to her. To my sons, Nicky and Pip, I thank them for bringing me back to reality every day.

I dedicate this document to my Grandmother, Mary Alice Downes, who passed away on June 21, 1990. Her total devotion to the happiness of others served as a reminder to the goal which we should all be seeking.

Michael T. Rehg

15 August 1990

Table of Contents

	Page
Preface	ii
List of Figures	vi
Abstract	vii
I. Introduction	1
Overview	1
General Issue	2
Specific Problem	5
Investigative Questions	5
II. Background	7
Introduction	7
Recent History of Kuwait	7
Arab Unity	9
Kuwait's Policy Interests	10
U.S. - Kuwaiti Relations	12
Importance of the Persian Gulf	13
U.S. Involvement in the Persian Gulf	14
Reagan's Foreign Policy Objectives	16
Reducing Soviet Influence	18
The Free Flow of Oil	19
The American Political Climate	19
III. Methodology	22
Overview	22
Process	22
Sources	24
Conclusion	25
IV. Political Models	26
Introduction	26
Model I: The Rational Actor Model	27
Criticisms	28
Model II: The Organizational Process Model	29
Criticisms	30
Model III: The Bureaucratic Politics Model	31
Criticisms	32
The Role of the President	34
Model IV: The Political Process Model	35
Conclusions	37
V. The Reflagging Policy	39

	Page
The Kuwaiti Request	39
The Response	41
Objectives of the Reflagging Policy . . .	42
Alternatives	43
Policy Criticisms	44
Freedom of Navigation	44
Reducing Soviet Influence	46
Other Criticisms	47
Allied Reaction	48
 VI. The Struggle for Power	 51
Introduction	51
The President	51
Department of Defense	54
Department of State	56
The National Security Council	60
The Decision	62
A Rational Act?	66
Evidence of a Bureaucracy	70
The Bureaucratic Argument	80
A Political Process	82
The Congressional - Executive Battle . . .	85
The War Powers Issue	87
Executive Position	88
Congressional Action	90
 VII. Final Conclusion	 94
Recommendations	99
 Bibliography	 100
 Vita	 108

List of Figures

Figure	Page
1. Map of the Persian Gulf	11

Abstract

The purpose of this research was to apply conceptual models of decision-making to a case study of the reflagging of the Kuwaiti oil tankers that occurred in 1987-1988. The actions of key players in United States foreign policy-making were analyzed using the rational actor model, organizational-process model, bureaucratic politics model and political-process model. From the evidence found on the interactions between the President, his department secretaries, advisors, and the Congress, the political-process model developed by Roger Hilsman best described the case. The other three models (developed by Graham Allison), were useful in describing the actions of parts of the policy-making process, but not as completely as Hilsman's political-process model. All power centers agreed on the objectives of the U.S. action in the Persian Gulf, but conflict ensued over the means to accomplish the goals of the policy. The President and his advisors were for the most part united on the policy. The fight between the President and Congress centered on the war powers resolution and went on for more than a year. Personal ideologies were more important than organizational perspectives in determining the actions of decision-makers.

APPLICATION OF DECISION-MAKING MODELS
TO FOREIGN POLICY:
A CASE STUDY OF THE
REFLAGGING OF KUWAITI OIL TANKERS

I. Introduction

Overview

In early 1987 the Reagan administration was faced with a decision regarding a request from the Government of Kuwait to provide protection for its oil tankers which had come under increased attacks from Iran during the previous summer. The Iran-Iraq war had been going on for six full years, but had not seriously affected the Persian Gulf states up to this point. But in the fall of 1986 (September - November), seven out of nine attacks made by Iran in the Persian Gulf were on Kuwaiti-bound vessels, which had only suffered nine out of Iran's fifty-five previous attacks from August 1984 to August 1986 (78:81-87). On March 7, 1987, the administration offered to "reflag" eleven Kuwaiti tankers, an action which legally makes the foreign ship part of the US Merchant Marine, and under the protection of the US Navy. The Soviet Union had offered to protect five vessels on March 2, 1987 (87:11). Before the first reflagged ship sailed for Kuwait, the USS Stark, a guided

missile frigate patrolling in the Persian Gulf, was accidentally struck by two missiles from an Iraqi warplane killing 37 sailors. With this incident, the decision to reflag the tankers was subjected to intense scrutiny by the Reagan administration, the Congress, the press, the American public, and foreign nations. Teams of Congressmen and administration officials were sent to the Gulf for a first hand look at the situation. Policy options were debated, and power struggles between individuals and organizations ensued. These struggles in foreign policymaking can be analyzed in the light of descriptive models developed to explain why individuals and organizations act as they do when making decisions. Examining the decision to reflag Kuwaiti tankers in 1987 against the framework of these descriptive models is the subject of this thesis.

General Issue

A government is an organization structured around a political system, which provides the forum for the national decision-making process. In the U.S., the division of power and interaction among multiple power centers makes it difficult to understand the process behind any particular decision. The separation of shared powers created by the framers of the American Constitution two hundred years ago almost guaranteed conflict in the making of policy, especially foreign policy, between the executive and legislative branches. Over the years, despite the sharing

of powers, the President has maintained the primary role of making foreign policy. Analysis of past decisions has produced many models to explain the political process driving national behavior. Applying these models to U.S. national security policy-making will lead to a better understanding of: a) how the President and his advisors reach decisions on national security, and b) how the U.S. political system shapes our national policy.

In 1971, Graham Allison developed the three most prevalent models on organizational behavior: the rational actor model, the organizational process model, and the bureaucratic politics model (1:1971). Allison described the models in the following manner.

In the rational actor model, actions chosen by national governments are those that will "maximize strategic goals and objectives." The nation is not only a rational agent, but unified, with "one set of specified goals,...one set of perceived options, and a single estimate of the consequences that follow from each alternative." The goals of nations are national security and national interests. Alternatives are ranked according to their associated costs and benefits, and the alternative which maximizes value for the nation is then chosen (1:32-33).

In Allison's organizational process model, events of international politics are the result of organizational processes. The standard operating procedures of the organization determine the behavior chosen, and their

leaders can only refine or combine the outputs. The actor, be it a government or an agency within a government, is not "monolithic", but "a constellation of loosely allied organizations on top of which government leaders sit." The problems faced by governments are "factored" or divided up to be handled by more than one organization, and this results in "fractionated" power. The central goal of the organization is often to ensure survival in terms of total personnel assigned and operating budget (1:78-82).

The bureaucratic politics model describes governmental action as the result of "compromise, conflict, and confusion of officials with diverse interests and unequal influence." Individuals within government play a bargaining game, but not a game which occurs at random or leisure, but structured along regularized channels. The channels are determined by the position held by the individuals, positions which can be advantageous or disadvantageous to the player. The goals of the individuals are determined by their national, organizational, or personal interests (1:162-167).

While Allison's three models are a good place to start, other models have been developed which are also important when analyzing decision-making. Foremost among these other models is one developed by Roger Hilsman entitled the political-process model. This model shows players choosing strategies based on their "realistic expectations" of the final outcome of the political struggle (35:78). In the political-process model policy struggle cuts across

institutional lines; individuals from different organizations may be politically aligned, and individuals from the same organization may be politically opposed.

Which model best describes the United States's decision to reflag Kuwaiti tankers? Was it a unified decision based on clear choices, or was it the result of a compromise between politically opposed factions?

Specific Problem

The purpose of this research is to determine which model best describes the decision-making process regarding national security in the U.S. The decision by the Reagan Administration to reflag Kuwaiti oil tankers in the Persian Gulf in 1987 will be used as a case study of the U.S. decision-making process. Much of the focus of the research will be on the interaction between and within power centers, i.e., the relationship between Congress and the President, relative strengths of members within the legislative and the executive branches, and other influential groups, individuals, and the role of foreign powers.

Investigative Questions

These questions must be answered before we can begin to understand U.S. national security policymaking in the case of the reflagging of Kuwaiti oil tankers:

1. What is the difference between decision-making and policy-making?
2. Who made the decision to reflag, what alternatives were

there, and what pressures were policy makers facing during the event?

3. How did the struggle for power between the President and Congress influence the decision to reflag?

4. How important was the decision to reflag? Did its importance affect the decision makers?

5. Can the event be explained using a conceptual model?

6. Which model best describes the behavior of the actors in the decision to reflag the tankers?

II. Background

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the recent history of Kuwait and the Persian Gulf, and the U.S. involvement in the Gulf. A review of past U.S. policies toward the Persian Gulf will aid in understanding the reactions of present day policymakers to crises in the Gulf. President Reagan's foreign policy viewpoint will be included in the historical survey. The situation in American politics during 1987 and 1988 and its effect on the decision to reflag will be also be examined.

Recent History of Kuwait

The British colonial empire of the 1800s encompassed Persia and the Middle East, including the Persian Gulf states. In 1899, Kuwait, out of fear of the aspirations of the Ottoman empire, signed a treaty calling for British protection from foreign aggression (27:34). Kuwait's internal political system has been stable. It has a long history of rulership under the Al Sabah family, and its societal structure remained largely unchanged from the mid 18th century to the 1950s, when the exploitation of oil began to change matters (27:32-33). Kuwait's oil production rose from 17 million tons in 1950 to 80 million in 1960, and brought revenues that helped Kuwait gain its independence in 1961. However, Kuwait still depended on Britain for

security through an agreement which allowed Kuwait to request British assistance if necessary (98:96).

It did not take long for Kuwait to exercise the agreement, as Iraqi president Qasim laid claim to Kuwait on 25 June 1961, one week after the new agreement was signed. When evidence of Iraqi troop concentrations suggested their intention to use force, Kuwait requested British assistance and 3000 troops were sent in to maintain peace. Kuwait was admitted to the Arab League on 20 July 1961, and the British force was replaced by a 3000 man Arab League force. It was the support of Kuwait by other Arab nations led by Saudi Arabia that ensured Kuwait's independence and admission to the Arab League (98:97). Following the overthrow of General Qasim in Iraq in 1963, Iraq recognized Kuwait's independent status it had heretofore denied, and Kuwait became a member of the United Nations. Territorial disputes would continue with Iraq in 1973 and 1976. In March 1973 a border dispute flared up in which Iraq seized a border post and killed two border officers. Again other Arab nations came to Kuwait's aid, persuading the Iraqis to withdraw (70:131). In 1976, Iraq sent troops three to five kilometers inside Kuwait, and demanded control or access to the islands of Warbah and Bubiyan. The islands are obstructions to Iraqi access to their naval port of Umm Qasr, developed with Soviet assistance in the mid-1970s. Warbah and Bubiyan had been relinquished to Kuwait in 1963 in exchange for a large loan. A 1977 agreement between Iraq and Kuwait led to the mutual

withdrawal of troops from the border and signaled improved relations for the two nations (50:111-112). The outbreak of the Iran-Iraq war further reduced tensions between Iraq and Kuwait, as Kuwait sided with Iraq and supplied them with capital to finance their war effort.

Arab Unity. Kuwait has taken a leadership role in the fight for Arab unity. In 1961, the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development was formed to "prove the country's place in the international community along with its sense of responsibility toward poorer members by helping to finance their development" (54:148). The Fund's annual budget is close to \$300 million (90:10). In the 1967 League of Arab States (Arab League) Summit Conference, Kuwait offered assistance to Arab states involved in the war with Israel, and contributed massive amounts of aid to Palestinian groups from 1967 to the mid-1970s (54:170). In the 1973 war Kuwaiti troops fought on the Suez Canal battlefield against Israel, and the Emir of Kuwait called an emergency meeting of the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC) "to determine a united policy for the use of the 'oil weapon' against Western states supporting Israel" (54:171). Many of these actions are carried out by the Kuwaiti government to silence the non-Kuwaiti population, many of whom are Palestinians.

In 1981 the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) was formed in an effort by Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the other Gulf States to ensure their collective stability and security.

Kuwait has been an active but moderate voice in the GCC in promoting the council's goals.

Kuwait's Policy Interests

Kuwait's small size, large oil reserves, and military weakness make it susceptible to the desires of its larger neighbors, Iraq, Iran, and Saudi Arabia (see Figure 1). According to a House of Representatives report, "Kuwait's good neighbor policies and support for pan-Arab causes are designed in part to insure its future independence" (80:89). The threats to Kuwaiti independence and security come mainly from Iraq, political unrest of Kuwait's large Palestinian population, and possible Israeli attack of Kuwaiti military installations, a fear that arises from the extensive political and economic assistance Kuwait provides to the "front-line" Arab states in the conflict against Israel (54:186). The four basic objectives of Kuwaiti foreign policy then, are 1) to maintain its security on the Arabian peninsula, 2) to work toward the defense of Arab unity and opposition to Israel, 3) to advocate the sharing of goals and objectives by the world Islamic community, and 4) to expand commercial, industrial, and diplomatic relations with Western Europe, Japan, and the United States, in support of the modernization of the country (54:178-180). Distrust of the radical Iranian regime which came to power in 1980, and skepticism of Iran's long term goals led Kuwait to support Iraq in the Iran-Iraq war. Their greater goal of Arab unity drives them to support the often radical Palestine



Figure 1. Map of the Persian Gulf

Liberation Organization in their quest for a state. Attempts to unify the Arabs has always been important, but became more feasible after oil exploration began in earnest in the late 1940s.

Militarily, Kuwait had a security agreement with Britain until 1971, when the British withdrew completely. Because its size limits the development of a large military power, Kuwait's defensive strategy is one of "developing friendly supporting alignments with larger powers" to maintain the status quo in Gulf security (54:187). Its military goal is to develop a force that could inflict heavy casualties to discourage any potential attackers.

U.S. - Kuwaiti Relations

U.S. policy towards Kuwait and the Persian Gulf as a whole have revolved around regional stability and access to oil. The U.S. has supported the "independence and territorial integrity of Kuwait" because of Kuwait's support of moderate U.S. allies in the Middle East, and "the importance we attach to regional stability and regional cooperation in the Persian Gulf" (80:89). These goals coincide with the GCC's objectives of regional stability and security of its members and the freedom of navigation in the Persian Gulf.

Economically, the U.S. and Kuwait shared a desire to promote trade. Kuwait's free trade policies, advanced investment institutions, and development agencies facilitated this relationship. U.S. trade with Kuwait was

healthy in the late 1980s, with U.S. exports to Kuwait from 1986 - 1988 ranging from \$504 million to \$690 million, and imports from Kuwait in the same period ranging from \$307 million to \$569 million (90:2).

In support of these interests, the objectives of the security assistance program with Kuwait has been to "support military modernization, particularly of general forces, to defend against regional threats, and continue upgrading general military capabilities for participation in regional self-defense efforts (77:185).

Although overall interests of the United States and Kuwait are supportive of one another, differences over specifics have created tension. At the heart of these differences is America's support of Israel at the expense of the Arab states. Kuwait's goal of Arab unity has run counter to our relationship with Israel, and resulted in the oil embargoes mentioned above. Kuwait's "good neighbor" policy and interest in preserving its national sovereignty have led to development of relations with Socialist-revolutionary states in the region opposed to U.S. policy.

Importance Of The Persian Gulf

Nearly all American policymakers share the belief that the Persian Gulf is an area of vital importance for the United States and our allies. The Gulf's economic importance is based on the oil reserves of the region, which have been estimated to be between 63 and 70 percent of the known oil reserves of the world, and it supplies 25 percent

of the oil on the world market (91:2). Western Europe depends on the gulf for 30 percent of its oil imports, Japan for up to 60 percent, and the U.S. for five percent (91:2). The importance of this oil to the western economy was seen in 1973-74 and 1978-79, when an oil supply disruption created economic depression in the United States and our allied countries (93:5).

U.S. Involvement in the Persian Gulf

As a result of the economic and political importance of the Persian Gulf, the U.S. has maintained a naval presence there for 40 years (91:1). Since the end of World War II, U.S. foreign policy in general was committed to the containment of Communism, and the Middle East was no exception to the policy (76:2). Eisenhower's policy of assisting nations against "overt armed aggression from any nation controlled by international communism," reflected the cold war era (31:339). This objective has been maintained by presidential administrations ever since with varying style. While early focus centered on the Arab-Israeli issues, the increasing importance of Persian Gulf oil to the world market shifted world attention in the early 1970s. As Britain relinquished control, American strategy "fostered both orderly progress within the Gulf states and peace and cooperation among them" (76:3). The Nixon doctrine attempted to shift the burden of worldwide security from one of direct U.S. responsibility to regional actors playing the primary security role (60:62). In support of this

doctrine, U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf region from 1971 - 1979 relied on military assistance to the "twin pillars" of Iran and Saudi Arabia to maintain stability in the region (91:3). In 1979, events occurred which demanded a change in the policy. The Islamic fundamentalist revolution occurred in Iran and resulted in the overthrow of the U.S.-supported regime in favor of the religious leader of Iran, the Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, who was intent on spreading the revolution. The new government "called for extending the Islamic revolution into neighboring states to unseat traditional regimes there" (60:63). Iranians viewed themselves as the regional superpower, intent on creating an "Islamic umbrella" over the Gulf states (36:7). For the U.S., this meant two new threats to Gulf security: ideological upheaval in the Arab Gulf states, or direct Iranian attack on one of the Gulf states (60:63). Then in December of 1979, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, and the Carter administration decided that a change was needed in the U.S. policy toward the Persian Gulf region. President Carter stated the crux of the policy in his State of the Union Address on January 23, 1980:

An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States of America, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force. (91:8)

Later that year the Iran-Iraq war broke out, which further de-stabilized the region. Iran's three-to-one population advantage and religious zeal led to early success

in the land war. Iran also destroyed Iraq's Basra oil complex which prevented Iraq from using the Persian Gulf for exporting oil. Iraq then built overland pipelines to eliminate dependence on the Gulf as a means of exporting oil. Iraq's strategy in the Gulf was to limit Iran's oil export by attacking Iranian shipping in the Gulf. Since Iran was totally dependent on the waterway for oil export, a decrease in Iran's oil export would decrease their war revenue. Iran attempted to reduce Iraq's war revenue by attacking the Gulf shipping that provided oil to the moderate Gulf states supplying aid to Iraq. The U.N. Security Council (UNSC) became alarmed and passed a measure calling for the protection of neutral shipping. Iran ignored the measure, and since most countries were not being hurt by the 'tanker war,' they chose to live with it (4:12). The U.S. maintained a position of neutrality with respect to the Iran-Iraq war.

Reagan's Foreign Policy Objectives

No significant change in the stated policy occurred with the election of President Reagan, but his outlook on foreign affairs did change the implementation of the policy. According to Morley, the Reagan administration was determined to regain the global power lost by the U.S. during the Carter years. Reagan favored direct action, especially military, instead of the indirect actions taken by the Carter administration in handling foreign policy (51:1). Reagan's approach can be summarized in five key

points: 1) Third World crises were the result of direct or indirect Soviet influence, 2) the U.S. should use military force as a solution when the opportunity arises, 3) U.S. policy in specific regions should focus on countering Soviet influence and raising American influence in that region, 4) the U.S. should seek unilateral actions, rather than cooperation with the Soviet Union, and attempt to drive the Soviets out of the region, and 5) the U.S. should take an aggressive, combatant posture in handling world problems, which would be more effective than the "timid" policies tried by Carter (28:132). This outlook is especially relevant when explaining U.S. actions in the Middle East in 1987, when Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger stated U.S. objectives in the Gulf to include:

denying Soviet access/influence in the region which would threaten free world access to regional oil resources; stability and security of the Gulf states which is critical to insure Free World access to oil; and access to Gulf oil resources, the disruption of which would seriously affect the Free World oil market. (93:i)

These objectives are reflected in the National Security Objectives of the United States in the Persian Gulf as stated by General Crist, CENTCOM Commander:

1. Deter and, if necessary, defend against Soviet aggression
2. Counter Soviet moves to gain power and influence
3. Protect friendly access to SW Asia oil
4. Strengthen regional stability
5. Limit unfriendly/hostile regime ability to destabilize or subvert friendly countries. (86:515)

Reducing Soviet Influence. A strategic and political goal of the U.S. in the region is to keep the Soviet presence and influence to a minimum, a point of view held by many observers and policy makers. Reagan's strong anti-Soviet stance made this clearly the most important objective for the reflagging effort. Weinberger stated that "Since the region is adjacent to the Soviet Union and without a major military power which can counter the Soviets, it is clearly vulnerable to Soviet meddling" (93:3). Secretary of State Shultz also stated, "We have an overriding strategic interest in denying the Soviet Union either direct control or increased influence over the region or any of its states." (91:9). And Michael Armacost, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, believed that the consensus among the Reagan Administration, the Congress, and the country was that one of the basic U.S. interests in the Gulf was to limit the Soviet Union's influence and presence in the Gulf, "an area of great strategic interest to the Soviets because of Western dependency on its oil supplies." (4:11).

U.S. fear of Soviet involvement in the Persian Gulf is not unfounded. The Soviets have cultivated relations with Iraq, although the relationship suffered when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan. Kuwait has shown interest in ties with the Soviet Union since the mid 1970s, perhaps because of the U.S.S.R.'s ability to dissuade Iraq from territorial demands on Kuwait (20:52).

The Free Flow of Oil. Because of the economic and political importance of the gulf, U.S. policy makers have concluded that the free flow of oil through the gulf and the freedom of navigation for vessels of neutral countries is important to the economies of the western world, and is consistent with worldwide policy of keeping sea lanes open (4:11). Leonard Binder states that "there is no doubt that a serious disruption of the flow of petroleum from the Persian Gulf would have a dangerously negative impact on the ability of the United States to continue its world leadership role" (5:66). Stein agrees, stating that "the United States has long-standing and important interests at stake in the Gulf" (72:146). A free flow of oil through the Gulf and access to the oil reserves by our allies is a fundamental goal of the U.S. in the region. To keep the price of oil stable and the supply steady, the U.S. seeks to keep shipping unimpaired and friendly governments preserved in the major oil-producing states (72:146).

The American Political Climate

The events of the Persian Gulf crisis cannot be separated from other events occurring in the U.S. at the time.

The biggest influence on American policymakers as a whole at the time of the reflagging was the Iran-Contra affair, which broke into the headlines in November 1986, and profoundly affected, in a real or imagined sense, the American credibility in the Middle East and the President's

credibility with the American public. Zbigniew Brzezinski, former national security advisor to President Carter, believed American foreign policy in the Middle East to be in a state of crisis and confusion (8:A23). He stated that "American credibility with the moderate Arab powers and Persian Gulf states has hit a low ebb" (8:A23). Secretary of the Treasury Baker, in an effort to calm Saudi Arabia, stated that the "United States will be strictly neutral" in the Iran-Iraq war and would not try to ship arms for hostages. The Saudis believed the Iran - Contra affair to be a breach of faith, as they are one of our closest allies in the region and subject to Iranian intimidation (43:A15).

Public opinion changed dramatically as a result of the scandal. In polls taken one month before and after the caper, the President's approval rating dropped from 64 percent to 47 percent, and was down to 40 percent in March 1987 (63:305).

The effect of the scandal was also seen on the Congressional - Executive relationship. With public opinion behind him, Reagan had a "crucial political resource" which he used in dealing with Congress, but that resource vanished with the Iran-Contra scandal (49:35). According to The New York Times, the affair weakened the President's position "opening the way for Congress to take a more confrontational role in foreign policy" (64:D1).

Another event which had an effect on the reflagging decision was the Iran-Iraq war. While the Persian Gulf

crisis was an outgrowth of the Iran-Iraq war, the previous events of the war, and especially its length had an influence on the national actors in the Persian Gulf. The U.S. position itself "tilted" from one of neutrality to support for Iraq, out of the fear of an Iranian victory in the war.

III. Methodology

Overview

Military officers are expected to be able to make decisions correctly and quickly. But decision-making is not often a black and white, cut and dried arena. If military officers better understood how decisions were made concerning national security policy, for which they are employed, they may become more effective in administering the national defense.

Process

The models which are used as a framework for analysis are descriptive in nature, which drives this research into a descriptive case study of the facts.

The research will begin with an extensive literature review of two separate areas: historical events and conceptual models. A review of historical events will include the political climate of the countries surrounding the Persian Gulf and America in 1987-1988 and the facts surrounding the reflagging. A review of the conceptual models will be done to define the models and lend a framework to the analysis of national behavior with respect to the decision-making process.

After providing the reader with a clear description of the models, I will apply them to the behavior of U.S. decision-makers in the Kuwaiti reflagging case, to determine

which model best fits the actions of those involved in the event.

There are several potential pitfalls in using a case study to verify decision-making models of foreign policy. The first danger is that for the lack of clear data or facts, the model is imposed on the data, rather than the data verifying the model. Caldwell points out that the goal of the analyst should be to determine the relative weights of all the factors in decision-making, instead of entering the study with a bias toward one theory or another (9:100). The complexity of human behavior makes it difficult to understand in terms of a conceptual model.

Another pitfall is that classified data unavailable to the author could reveal facts that point to an entirely different conclusion than the available facts suggest. Analysts of national security issues must work with this restriction in mind and hope that the unclassified facts do tell the whole truth.

Thirdly, analysis of the American system of government may not produce conclusions applicable to other nation's systems. Cultural characteristics play a large role in human behavior; cultural differences could invalidate the use of these models to analyze foreign countries. The goal of this research will be to draw conclusions about the U.S. system and avoid this problem.

Finally, since every political decision is made under different circumstances, using past information may not be

valid in the Kuwaiti reflagging case. Or, the Kuwaiti reflagging case may be unique from a decision-making standpoint and not reflect the typical manner in which policy is made. Thorough research of the events, quality sources, and a good understanding of the models will reduce the risk of a poor application of the models to the event.

Sources

Much of the information gathered for this research was taken from Congressional hearings and reports, which were held or compiled during the ongoing crisis. They provided excellent first-hand information and testimony from many of the players directly involved in the situation. The New York Times was also used as a source of knowledge of the events as they transpired, as well as a gauge of public opinion expressed in the editorial pages.

Personal memoirs were used as a means of getting information on the inner workings of the Reagan administration. While care must be taken to avoid the personal biases of their authors, these accounts do provide valuable insight on the day-to-day decision making of the White House. Martin Anderson's Revolution was the best written of the memoirs I used, providing a good analysis of the first half of Reagan's presidency, and generally avoiding the 'gossipy' style which often plagues that type of source.

Conclusion

Hopefully, with a good understanding of the models, and knowledge of how they have been applied in the past, the conclusions of this thesis will be reliable. Controversy exists among the experts on which model best describes the decision-making process, so not everyone will agree with my conclusion. Perhaps this research can help solve the controversy by adding to the body of knowledge which now exists.

IV. Political Models

Introduction

Political analysts have developed a wide variety of models or theories to explain decision-making. The disagreement which exists over the correct use of these models reflects the difficulty of explaining decision-making. After an extensive review of the literature, Caldwell concluded that "It is probably unrealistic to expect that any single model of foreign policy decision-making can adequately and accurately capture the dynamics of each aspect of the policy process." (9:103-104). While he focused his analysis on one particular model, he lists a total of twelve frameworks of decision-making available to analysts in the late 1970's. More models have appeared in the twelve years since he published his findings, but it is still important to realize "under what set of conditions each approach is most applicable, for it is quite possible that each model may be more or less applicable depending upon the context." (9:105).

It is widely recognized that the work of Graham Allison, Essence of Decision : Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis (1971), is the most influential of modern analysts in guiding subsequent direction of foreign policy theory. In the book, he compared and contrasted the use of three different models in explaining events during the Cuban Missile Crisis. There have been disagreements and

refinements to his models, but the majority of analysts start with or mention his theories as a frame of reference.

Schwenk stated three advantages of using Allison's framework for decision-making: 1) his models "deal with three fundamentally different perspectives for explaining large-scale organizational decisions", 2) "Allison's framework suggests new research questions or directions as well as some interesting implications for practice", and 3) his three models are widely known and used (61:11).

Model I: The Rational Actor Model

Allison defined the trademark of the rational actor model as "the attempt to explain international events by recounting the aims and calculations of nations or governments." (1:10). He looked at the wealth of publications on explaining national behavior available in 1971, and noted some assumptions which characterize Model I:

Each assumes that what must be explained is an action, i.e., behavior that reflects purpose or intention. Each assumes that the actor is a national government. Each assumes that the action is chosen as a calculated solution to a strategic problem. For each, explanation consists of showing what goal the government was pursuing when it acted and how the action is chosen as a calculated solution. (1:13)

The idea of rational behavior is tied to the economic man model which describes man as being rational as well as economic. Simon noted that "this man is assumed to have knowledge of the relevant aspects of his environment which, if not absolutely complete, is at least impressively clear and voluminous." (66:99). He also stated that this man has a well-organized scale of preferences, and can choose the

action that will allow him "to reach the highest attainable point on his preference scale." (66:99). By thinking of nations as individuals, we give them human characteristics, including rationality. Allison claims that in describing national behavior, the language itself forces us into the rational actor framework. The words decision, policy, and actor all describe concepts which "identify phenomena as actions performed by purposeful agents." (1:28).

The model depicts international actors - states - as black boxes. The inner workings of each box cannot be seen, but their actions in international affairs exposes their motives and intentions. Since all black boxes act rationally, they possess the same motivations and goals. Their behavioral differences are the result of their different sizes, strengths, and strategic locations (35:47).

Hilsman summarized the models' assumptions by saying that states are the actors, with goals that can be prioritized, methods for achieving the goals can be analyzed systematically and rationally, and the action chosen will achieve the goal in the most economical and effective means. (35:46). Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff's viewpoint on the "classical" model is that decisions are made in two dimensions - "utility and probability", and policy makers will make decisions to maximize utility. (17:477).

Criticisms. While this pattern of thinking may be useful for a description of everyday human behavior, it came under much criticism by analysts for its simplified view of organizational decision-making. Simon saw the rational

actor model as needing revision, but not total rejection, and suggested the concept of "bounded rationality", where choices are not maximizing or optimizing behavior, but "satisficing"; in examining alternatives, the first one which meets a minimum standard of acceptability is agreed upon as a course of action, even though it may not be the best choice. (67:38+). Braybrooke and Lindblom reject the rational-policy model on the basis that "it presupposes omniscience and a kind of comprehensive analysis which is prohibitively costly and which time pressures normally do not permit." (7:64). They list the limiting factors of every solution as individual problem-solving capacities, amount of information available, the cost of analysis, and the inseparability of fact and value. (7:65). Other critics state that man is not always rational in making decisions. Singer argued that stress and anxiety may cause decision-makers to act in ways that are not rational (68:428+), and Patchen suggested the need for greater attention to the presence of nonrational and partly conscious factors in the personalities of those who make decisions. (55:173).

Allison saw the shortcomings of the rational actor model and developed an organizational process model.

Model II: The Organizational Process Model

In developing this model, Allison noted that political analysts used terms of organizational theory which had previously been developed by the social sciences. So while organizational theory was not new, applying it to

governmental decision-making was new. The complexity of governmental systems led Allison to conclude that instead of viewing behavior (or decisions) as a deliberate choice, decisions result from the outputs of large organizations functioning according to standard patterns of behavior. (1:67). Organizations are the primary influence on decision-making in this model. Governments are made up of organizations; they see problems through the sensors of the organizations, and "define alternatives and estimate consequences as their component organizations process information." (1:67). Governmental action is based on the routines of its organizations. Since the problems that face governments are large, they require the outputs of more than one organization. The leaders of the government, according to Allison, coordinate the organizational outputs, but they cannot control the organizations' behavior. Governmental leaders cope with problems by dividing up different areas of a problem to different organizations; the output the leader receives back is the product of each organization's viewpoint. In the U.S. government, the Department of State is responsible for matters of foreign policy, while the Department of Defense is responsible for military problems. While these two organizations are autonomous, their actions have to be coordinated to solve problems which require both organizations to react. Complex problems require the coordination of many organizations.

Criticisms. Hilsman criticized Model II for its inability to explain actions of higher magnitude. It had

only been applied successfully to smaller parts of large decisions. For example, it could be applied to the failure of the Soviets to camouflage missile sites in Cuba, but not the overall decision to put the missiles in Cuba. He states that "Model II provides insights that make it a useful corollary to the other models" but does not stand up as a separate model. (35:56+). Allison himself later integrated Model II with Model III as part of the bureaucratic politics paradigm (9:95).

Model III: The Bureaucratic Politics Model

Models I and II are too restrictive to explain complex foreign policy decision-making. Allison explained that governmental leaders are not a "monolithic" group, but each is an individual involved in a game called politics, "bargaining along regularized circuits among players positioned hierarchically within the government," (1:144), and government behavior is the result of these bargaining games. The model in his words:

...sees no unitary actor, but rather many actors as players - players who focus not on a single strategic issue but on many diverse intra-national problems as well; players who act in terms of no consistent set of strategic objectives but rather according to various conceptions of national, organizational, and personal goals; players who make government decisions not by a single, rational choice but by the pulling and hauling that is politics. (1:144)

He goes on to say that the result of these political actions could be a policy that was distinct from the intentions of any one player, like a vector in a force

diagram. In this model, the power and skill of the players is important in determining the final outcome. Also important, is the concept that many issues are competing for the attention of the players everyday, so that broad decisions are not made by a single person, but smaller decisions of many individuals on one issue make up the overall governmental decision. Confusion is part of the political process (1:145+).

Lindblom's model of incrementalism, where political change is made by a series of small steps, supports Model III (45:79+). Gelb and Halperin suggested the bureaucratic politics approach to foreign policy as "bureaucrats pursuing organizational, personal, and domestic political interests, as well as their own beliefs about what is right...." (22:28). Destler supports Model III from two basic angles: that no single individual has the power, wisdom or time to decide all of the executive branch issues himself, and even if officials agree on an issue, they often take different paths in how to resolve the issue (15:52).

Criticisms. Krasner wrote a scathing critique of the bureaucratic politics approach, calling it misleading, dangerous, and compelling. (44:226). He claimed that it obscured the power of the President; undermined an important assumption of democracy, that of holding elected officials responsible for their actions; and gave leaders an excuse for failing (44:226). Krasner emphasizes the role of the President, stating "bureaucratic analysts ignore the

critical effect which the President has in choosing his advisors, establishing their access to decision-making, and influencing bureaucratic interests." (44:229). Head also criticized the bureaucratic politics approach as neglecting the "power of high officials to lead, manage, and direct the bureaucracy." (33:73). Many critiques of the bureaucratic politics approach follow this line. The power of individuals, especially the president, in making foreign policy is downplayed or lost in the bureaucracy machine of model III.

Caldwell listed nine criticisms of Model III developed by many different analysts after Allison published Essence of Decision. Some of the more important issues include those brought up by Krasner; others included:

1. The approach is not that new; it had been discussed in terms of the policy clashes of World Wars I and II, and the Korean War;
2. It may not apply to analysis of foreign policy in other countries;
3. Organizational position may not determine a decision-maker's stance on an issue;
4. The approach underplays the importance of the public, interest groups, and the Congress in formulation and implementation of foreign policy; and
5. Concepts borrowed from theories of private business may not be applicable to analysis of governmental decision-making (9:93+).

The Role of the President. The bureaucratic-politics model developed by Allison initially did not distinguish the president from any other player, although in later publications, Allison places the president at the center of American foreign policy. The classical study on the presidency, Neustadt's Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership (1960), also did not give the president total control. He states that the American system promotes a sharing of power, and that the constitution did not create a government of separated powers, but of separated institutions sharing power (53:8). In making policy, presidential power, congressional power, the power of the press, and the powers of political parties to name a few, all "share in the making of American public policy." (53:9). In this setting, "presidential power is the power to persuade, and the power to persuade is the power to bargain (53:10). The president cannot get results by ordering a task to get done, he has to build support for his position among the influential members who serve him. He may have more vantage points over any other single person in the government, because of his special status and authority, but this does not guarantee his success in implementing his strategies. His authority is checked by the Congress, which has the power as a group to override the president.

The president's power over leaders of government organizations is also checked by conflicting responsibilities felt by the leaders. They are responsible

to the president, their organization, the congress, their clients, and themselves (53:13). An agency chief cannot become too far aligned with any one group or person, since most issues split his responsive groups into at least two camps. As a result, the president must bargain for his support along with everyone else. Analysts in support of this view have used Truman's famous remark upon Eisenhower's election to office in 1952: "He'll sit here and he'll say, 'Do this! Do that!' and nothing will happen. Poor Ike--it won't be a bit like the Army"(9:96; 15:52; 30:280; 53:9).

Destler also stresses the mutual dependency of the cabinet members and the president, for in carrying out the president's orders, cabinet members meet the resistance of other bureaucrats. Cabinet members who lost the respect of their subordinates by bowing too often to the president, would lose effectiveness in implementing presidential policies, and become useless to the president (15:52+).

Model IV: The Political Process Model

Roger Hilsman in his book The Politics of Policymaking in Defense and Foreign Affairs, develops a model he calls the political-process model. He defines a political process as "a device for making group decisions", which is characterized by the presence of disagreement or conflict, the presence of shared values, the presence of competing groups, and the presence of power (35:68).

The model is based on the assumption that many people are involved in government decision-making. In making

foreign policy, the President and Congress are two of the most important power centers. The people in the executive and legislative branches hold power in an individual and organizational sense, power which varies with the issue at hand, and the position of the players involved in the issue. But the struggle for power also occurs among and within the White House staff, the Cabinet departments, the National Security Council, the Central Intelligence Agency, and the political parties themselves. The individuals who head the key organizations play a role in influencing the President's policies. Often, their degree of influence is determined by the President. According to Hilsman's model, each power center has different goals, but even when their goals are similar, they conflict over the means to achieve this goal. The policies that result from this political process, as each power center struggles for dominance, are compromises, or as Hilsman states, the power centers "strain toward agreement" (35:69).

Hilsman criticized the bureaucratic-politics approach as relying too heavily on the organization as the most important determinant of policy, and developed his own model, the political-process model, which I will label Model IV. Model IV places the "mind-set", or fundamental assumptions of each individual player above the nature of the process as more important in determining policy. The political-process model also differs from the bureaucratic politics approach in that the result of bargaining will not

be a policy that no player intended on reaching, but rather, it will be a policy agreed upon by a wide number of people. He gives the players the intelligence to foresee the possible policy outcomes of two opposing sides (35:77+).

Conclusions

Which model then, does one use in analyzing foreign policy decision-making? Are nations rational actors (Model I), organizational bureaucracies (Model II), or large bargaining arenas (Model III)? Or is the political-process the most important factor (Model IV)? Several authors have pointed out that one model alone cannot describe the process in its entirety. The situation and the level of analysis can validate the use of different models to explain national behavior. Nevertheless, Allison leaned toward Model III as the best approximation of the arena, while Hilsman believes that Model IV is the best description of the political process.

One fact is clear from the literature: much disagreement exists among the experts over how foreign policy decisions are reached in the American government. The nature of the system lends itself to various interpretations of its information flow and decision processes. And of course, human behavior, perhaps the most important ingredient, is nearly never predictable.

Hopefully, by integrating the use of political models, decision-making, and thus, the behavior of states can be explained or even predicted. By examining the decision to

reflag Kuwaiti tankers, and the actions of the individuals and organizations involved, we can determine which model or combination of models best fits the American system. With this knowledge in hand, members of American society can better understand their own country, their own leaders, and the system which affects their own personal lives. One must remember, however, that models are simplifications of reality, and the human factor often plays a larger, more qualitative role in decision-making.

V. The Reflagging Policy

The Kuwaiti Request

The Iran-Iraq war had been going on for six years before the "Gulf War" began to heat up. Combined Iranian-Iraqi attacks on shipping rose from 47 in 1985 to 107 in 1986 (85:48). Iraq had been attacking Iranian oil shipments in the gulf since the start of the war, a strategy that Iran did not employ until 1984 (85:48). Iraq was not using the Gulf as a means to export oil, so Iran targeted the shipping of Iraq's supporters. Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were Iraq's primary allies selling 300,000 barrels of oil a day from the Neutral Zone for the benefit of Iraq. Kuwait also supplied Iraq with financial aid, allowed Iraq use of its airspace, and allowed vessels carrying war supplies to unload at Kuwaiti ports and travel overland to Iraq (78:8). Consequently, Iranian attacks in the Gulf centered on Kuwaiti and Saudi Arabian shipping. Of the 64 Iranian attacks between May 1984 and August 1986, 33 were directed at Saudi Arabian ships, 15 at Kuwaiti shipping, and the remainder at other GCC states' shipping. When Saudi Arabia and Iran agreed on OPEC oil policy in September 1986, the focus of Iranian attacks shifted to Kuwait. From September 1986 to July 1987, 30 out of 44 attacks were on Kuwaiti shipping. By early November 1986, the trend was clear to Kuwait, and they informed the members of the GCC of their intention to request international protection (72:148). In

November they made their request to the Soviet Union, and in December to the United States. The urgency of the request was increased in January when an Iranian offensive caused concern among the Gulf states that Iraq was on the brink of falling. The Gulf states had been fearful of the spread of the revolution by means of Iranian propaganda, subversion, and military power (47:98). The Gulf states, Egypt and Jordan supported Iraq due to their belief that Iraq acted as a buffer to Iran "that must not be allowed to collapse." (4:13).

Even more shocking to Kuwait were the terrorist bombings of three oil installations on the eve of the Islamic summit conference in January. It marked the first time a terrorist act was committed in Kuwait by a Kuwaiti citizen, and elicited a call from the Emir of Kuwait for national unity and a preservation of justice (40:A4). Kuwait was fearful of the war "spilling over" into their country, and terrorism was one extension of the war. The request by Kuwait of both superpowers was seen by critics as Kuwait's way of bringing an end to the Iran-Iraq war, instead of a request for protection of their shipping (39:E2). On 23 May, the Emir of Kuwait said that "the war has extended even to the great powers", and "has threatened the freedom of international navigation" (41:A3). His remarks seemed to verify this critique.

The GCC also called for international protection of shipping in the Gulf from all countries with interests in

the Gulf - especially the superpowers (41:A3). Kuwait also asked for British, French, and Chinese protection or reflagging. France and China were not interested, and Britain did not actively pursue the issue.

The Response

In early March, Kuwait agreed to lease three oil tankers from the Soviet Union, for the purpose of coming under the protection of the Soviet Navy. In recent years, the Soviet Union had attempted to increase its influence in the Middle East and welcomed the opportunity to enter into an agreement with Kuwait (42:A1). Approximately five days after the Soviet agreement, President Reagan agreed to a policy of reflagging eleven Kuwaiti oil tankers.

No public discussion of the policy took place in Congress until May 17, 1987, when the USS Stark was struck by an Iraqi missile, killing 37 sailors. Although the attack was labeled an accident, President Reagan responded by putting the U.S. naval forces in the Gulf at a higher state of alert and stated that the administration was "moving quickly" on the plan to reflag eleven Kuwaiti tankers (13:A12).

Initially, no augmentation of forces assigned to the Middle East Force (MIDEASTFOR) was considered necessary to carry out the reflagging. But due to the attack on the USS Stark, the deployment of Iranian silkworm missiles, and questions over Iranian reaction, the force requirements were increased (87:21). In his June 15 report, Weinberger stated

that the MIDEASTFOR would be augmented "with three additional combatants, configured to meet potential sea, air and land-based missiles threats" (93:iii). The MIDEASTFOR after augmentation included the command ship LaSalle, three guided missile cruisers, a guided missile destroyer, and four guided missile frigates. A carrier battle group would be scheduled to remain in the Indian Ocean, and a Surface Action Group, including the battleship Missouri, and a CG-47 class Aegis cruiser were deployed to the area (78:32+). By November 1987, the U.S. presence totalled nearly 30 ships and 15,000 naval personnel, and represented "the greatest concentration of naval firepower in a region since the Vietnam war" (85:41).

Objectives of the Reflagging Policy

From the outset the administration proposed three reasons for reflagging the Kuwaiti vessels: 1) to ensure the free flow of oil by preserving freedom of navigation, 2) to reduce or limit the Soviet presence in the Persian Gulf, and 3) to stop the spread of the Islamic fundamentalist revolution and Iranian intimidation in the region. One of the goals which was not always explicitly stated in the policy was the desire to restore American credibility in the region.

Secretary of Defense Weinberger was a staunch supporter of the reflagging policy, and testified many times before Congress to explain the actions of the administration. He

saw reflagging as holding up our commitment in the Persian Gulf to the moderate Arab countries, and consistent with U.S. policy there over the past 40 years (79:129). He believed that if the U.S. pulled out of the Gulf, the Soviets would move in to gain access to a warm water port and give them an opportunity to block western access to oil (79:143).

Weinberger believed that it was in our political best interests to maintain good relations with the moderate Gulf states - the members of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) - because their wealth and oil reserves make them influential both within and beyond the region. The great wealth of these states coupled with their military weakness, make them subject to subversion (93:5). Turning down a request for protection by one of these countries would have damaged our position in the region, and given the U.S.S.R. an opportunity to improve their regional relationships.

In dealing with the moderate Gulf states Secretary of State Shultz stated to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee: "Anything that might disrupt their commerce - war, political instability, terrorism, or subversion - is against their interests as well as ours." (91:9).

Alternatives. Operation Staunch, an effort to limit arms sales to Iran was part of the U.S. policy towards ending the war. According to Richard Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Operation Staunch reduced the amount of arms flowing into

Iran from more than one billion dollars worth in 1984 from 23 western countries, to less than \$200 million from four western nations in 1987 (81:3). With Iran obtaining arms from more than 30 nations, the effectiveness of Operation Staunch was neither immediate nor all-inclusive. Murphy stated the goal of the operation was to get support from all five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council first, which would require Soviet and Chinese cooperation (82:43). It was hoped the Soviet Union would influence the Eastern European countries who were supplying Iran with significant amounts of arms, while China was Iran's main arms supplier, including the Silkworm missiles.

In addition to the arms embargo, President Reagan signed an executive order on October 29, 1987 prohibiting all imports from Iran into the U.S. and added 14 broad categories of dual use items to the list of proscribed exports (81:3).

Policy Criticisms

Freedom of Navigation. Secretary of Defense Weinberger emphasized the limited nature of the reflagging policy, stating it would not include protection for all non-belligerent shipping in the Gulf (93:i). A statement released by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs attempted to clear up the confusion over the intentions of the policy. In addition to reaffirming that the policy was not intended to protect all neutral shipping in the Gulf, it stated "...only American flag vessels are

under our protection with the exception, on a limited case-by-case basis, of ships carrying our FMS equipment to friendly non-belligerent states in the region" (79:323).

Whether the free flow of oil, or the freedom of navigation as it was also termed by the administration, was protected by reflagging became a point of dispute. How would reflagging eleven Kuwaiti vessels lead to a free flow of oil when the percentage of oil supplied by the Kuwaiti tankers was less than one percent? How would ships from other nations be protected when they were not under our flag? Rubin stated that reflagging has created "a privileged class of 11 tankers carrying a relatively small portion of gulf oil exports..." (59:128). In fact, the flow of oil throughout the Gulf war was not seriously impacted, but was actually in excess of what the world market demanded (14:A10; 59:128). In a meeting in December 1986, OPEC ministers were negotiating to cut production by five to ten percent, although friction between Iran and Iraq delayed an agreement (52:3).

Critics also contend that the policy did not deter attacks on neutral shipping in the Gulf, but may have actually provoked conflict. Iranian and Iraqi attacks greatly increased after the U.S. deployed forces to the gulf (72:155). Combined attacks during the first half of 1987 totaled 78 (Iran 37, Iraq 41), and during the second half of 1987 totaled 178 (Iran 66, Iraq 112) (65:Table 1). When Iran started mining the Gulf, all ships became subject to

damage, regardless of whose flag they were flying. Ramazani does not believe that the U.S. decision to reflag was based on a "highminded commitment to the principle of freedom of navigation" (57:62). Iraq had been responsible for most of the attacks on shipping in the Gulf, but even with an increase in the number of attacks, the total during 1987 was still less than one percent of shipping in the Gulf. Iraq had little to lose by disrupting shipping in the Gulf - all of their oil exports were by overland pipeline. Iran, however, depended on Gulf shipping for all of their exports, and would therefore not be interested in closing the gulf to free navigation. He states that the principle of free navigation was used by the Reagan administration to justify a controversial decision (57:62).

According to Rubin, closing the Gulf to shipping would be detrimental to Iranian interests, since they rely on it for their oil exports. Iran has improved some of their port facilities near the Strait of Hormuz, in an area outside the range of Iraqi aircraft; and their reserves of missiles and launchers are not great enough to keep the strait closed for more than a few days (59:127+). These facts cast doubt on the claim that Iran was preparing to close the Gulf to shipping.

Reducing Soviet Influence. The agreement between Kuwait and the U.S.S.R. represented a threat to Reagan and his administration, stemming from an ideology which dictated Communist containment. President Reagan's justification for

his policy can be seen in his speech broadcast to the American public on June 15, 1987. In that speech, the President stated that "if we don't reflag the Kuwaiti vessels, the Soviets will."

Opponents of the policy were not against the concept of reducing Soviet influence in the Gulf, but opposed the idea of using reflagging as a means to accomplish this goal. Since the Soviets had already agreed to lease three tankers to the Kuwaitis, they were assured of an increased naval presence in the Gulf. Members in Congress wanted to reduce the risk to American lives in the Gulf, and suggested a withdrawal of forces or an international effort in escorting the tankers. Admiral William J. Crowe, Jr., Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff was against the withdrawal of forces based on the danger of Iran winning the war and on the premise that withdrawal would damage our relations with the Arab nations who desired our presence (79:134). Weinberger was against a U.N. multinational force because it would include Soviet ships and lead to an increased role for the Soviet Union in the Gulf (79:137). Both Weinberger and Shultz wanted Soviet cooperation, but restricted to support of peace-making measures in the U.N. Security Council (4:16).

Other Criticisms. The loss of American lives brought up the question of why we had a military force in the region. The policy was criticized for its open-ended nature and its lack of effectiveness in achieving its stated goals.

The administration was criticized for not thinking through the implications of an increased military force in the region. Weinberger believed that reflagging Kuwaiti vessels, and increasing the American naval presence in the gulf, would deter Iranian attacks on shipping and intimidation in the gulf (93:iii). But the increasing tensions in the region alarmed Congress to the chance of the U.S. being drawn into the Iran-Iraq war. The policy was criticized for not protecting freedom of navigation or the flow of oil because of its limited scope. The importance of the Persian Gulf to the United States was not disputed by the administration or Congress, but the means by which the goal of security of the region was accomplished was hotly disputed.

Allied Reaction. Members of Congress believed that America was shouldering all the burden of the area when we only received 6-7 percent of our oil from the Gulf. Congress and the press were in favor of an international peacekeeping force (92:A27). Initially, the U.S. received little support from our allies in escorting Kuwaiti ships. Although the British and French both maintained a naval presence in the Gulf, they did not want to become involved in hostilities with Iran. While the British had escorted 104 missions in the Gulf in the first half of 1987, they kept their role quiet (46:A3). The French were one of Iraq's main arms suppliers, but French tankers used the Gulf infrequently. Their naval presence was in turn minimal, and

thus, France did not want to provoke Iran in a region where they had limited military power. Both countries were hesitant about Reagan's anti-Soviet justification for reflagging, remembering that similar battle lines had been drawn in Lebanon and resulted in an American withdrawal after heavy casualties. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher wanted to look after British ships and not be involved in a "local antipathy", while French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac wanted no part in an international force and "did not want to be dragged into a policy that is not our own" (46:A3).

The unanimous passage of United Nations Security Council resolution 598 on July 20, 1987, by all five permanent members indicated a shift in world involvement towards actions in the Persian Gulf. The resolution called for an end to the Iran - Iraq war. However China, Iran's main arms supplier, and the U.S.S.R., not wanting to damage relations with Iran, would not support an arms embargo to Iran. The effectiveness of the resolution was limited by the conflicts among the nations on how to best arrive at a cease-fire. The Gulf States were hesitant to appear aligned directly against Iran for fear of reprisal and were thus not overly cooperative with the U.S. In the minesweeping effort the U.S. was aided by Saudia Arabia and Kuwait, but none of the Gulf States would agree to our request for basing rights to provide air cover for the reflagging effort. The European countries refused an American request for

assistance in minesweeping, but did conduct minesweeping for their ships in the Gulf. So while our Gulf allies were intent on maintaining their sovereignty, our European allies were not going to involve themselves in a web they perceived as too entangling by its complexity.

China's role in the policy was peripheral, but important in that it was Iran's principal arms supplier. Most importantly, it supplied Iran with Silkworm missiles, which Iran deployed at the Strait of Hormuz and used in attacks against reflagged vessels. The missiles gave the Reagan Administration justification to increase the military presence in the Gulf and rallied popular support around his military responses.

VI. The Struggle for Power

Introduction

In examining the facts behind the reflagging of the tankers it is possible to separate the event into two distinct phases, policy formulation and policy implementation. Since the purpose of this thesis is to examine the decision-making process behind the formulation of U.S. national security policy, implementation per se will not be evaluated. The two stages, however, are not entirely separate from one another. There are certain actions taken by key actors in the event which took place after the policy was implemented, but which are relevant to the policy formulation phase and this thesis. Hilsman stated that decisions of governments are rarely decisive or final, with "recognizable beginnings and sharp, decisive endings" (35:60). The dynamics of politics results in an overlapping of policy formulation and policy implementation.

Before examining the dynamic political situation, an overview of the most influential players in this process is necessary. The most influential players in the reflagging decision were the President, the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of Defense. They were brought together under the National Security Council umbrella.

The President

The President is the single most important individual in the policy-making process. His personality, preferences,

biases, and management style will be more important than any other actor's in the process. Martin Anderson, one of Reagan's economic policy advisors summed up the importance of the President's style.

In any organization, no matter the size, the chief executive's style has a profound effect on how and how well that organization works. In the White House that effect is greatly intensified. Every aspect of his personality, appearance, manner, and thought processes is amplified enormously. The pulse of the federal government beats to his rhythms. The nature of a president's personality does not ultimately determine the course of policymaking, but it can have a powerful impact on that course - a strong, positive president can accelerate the flow of policy, a weak president can slow it." (3:281)

Given this importance of the President's personality to the process of policymaking an examination of Reagan's personality and management style is needed.

Reagan has been described as good-natured on the surface, his calm exterior belying a subliminal toughness. He made few specific demands of his subordinates, and rarely gave instructions. In achieving his goals, however, he was relentless in his pursuit, always asking for double what he wanted so that he could compromise for more than he expected (3:284+). When he compromised, it was because he "believed it better to get half a loaf today and come back and get the rest tomorrow or next year" (71:301). He loved to interact with people and preferred talking to writing, something to be expected from a former actor. In policymaking, this trait translated to a love of negotiation, the give and take that must occur to form policy. According to Anderson,

Reagan surprised many close observers in Washington who did not believe he could handle the immense demands of the job, and "succeeded in restoring the power of the presidency" (3:282).

Much has been written on Reagan's management style since the Iran-contra affair brought them to the public's eye. It has been described as a "hands off" type of approach. Reagan's own description of his philosophy was to "surround yourself with the best people you can find, delegate authority, and don't interfere" (18:33). Larry Speakes, Reagan's press secretary for the majority of his administration, described Reagan as "a manager who doesn't get involved in details. He sets the policy and just assumes he has competent people to carry it out" (71:303). This led Reagan to delegate much of his oversight power to his aides, for better or worse (71:67). His management style had dangerous flaws and was high risk - prone to succeeding or failing in a grand way (3:281).

Although Reagan promised in 1980 to restore continuity to foreign policymaking which had supposedly been lost by President Carter, his "hands-off" approach led to the failure of Reagan's foreign policy machinery as well (69:25). The Iran-Contra scandal reflected the disarray of Reagan's foreign policy structure near the end of his second term. His two most trusted agents of foreign policy disagreed with selling arms to Iran, yet the policy was still carried out, by an organization that had turned from policy coordinators into policy implementers.

Department of Defense

The Department of Defense is a major power center influencing foreign policy. Its influence has been attributed to its large size, its presence in the foreign policy decision-making apparatus, and its power base in domestic politics through defense contracts (48:226). Its influence has increased in the post world war II era, and recently with the development of the "military-industrial complex," its power extends from domestic economic considerations.

Caspar Weinberger served as President Reagan's Secretary of Defense for nearly all of his term as President, resigning in November 1987. He had previously served under Reagan in California as his Director of Finance. Under Nixon, Weinberger served as chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and as Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. He left Washington in 1975 to become a Betchel Group executive, from where Reagan called him to be the Secretary of Defense in 1980 (95:17). His hardline viewpoint of dealing with the Soviets from a position of strength fit well into Reagan's goals and ideology. According to Speakes, Weinberger tried to fulfill Reagan's promise to the people to "restore our national security" (71:80). With the President's support, Weinberger successfully achieved a conventional and strategic military buildup in the 1980s (48:232). Reagan's support of

Weinberger's budget requests was crucial to achieving the defense buildup during a time when a recession and the budget deficit chipped away at the national defense "consensus" in Congress (95:18).

Weinberger was active in foreign policy as it related to defense. He assisted William Clark in shaping up Reagan's national security policy process in the first term of Reagan's presidency (6:165).

In dealing with the Pentagon, White stated that Weinberger was too busy with the demands of his office to effectively manage the Department, working himself to exhaustion at one point (95:24). Although his experience in financial and business positions served him well in budget dealings, he was criticized for his lack of technical knowledge of the weapons systems themselves, had to rely on his technical advisors, and did not know when to curb the requests of the military services. One ex-Secretary of Defense stated that Weinberger had been taken in by the Pentagon - that "anything they want he gives them" (95:19). Another said that Weinberger was not managing the services, only "buying all the toys on the shelf" (95:20). And a third ex-Secretary of Defense stated that Weinberger "hasn't had the energy to learn about weapons systems or strategy" (95:20).

Weinberger's appointment of Frank Carlucci, a long term friend as Deputy Secretary of Defense, and conservative Richard Perle as Assistant Secretary of Defense, whose views

meshed with Weinberger's, ensured consistency among the senior members of the department. But he did clash with the JCS on policy, as in 1982 when the Chairman of the JCS opposed Weinberger's nuclear strategy (97:200). But his views on the use of force and his increase in military expenditures were consistent with the views of the military leadership (97:222,200).

But White argues that the Pentagon organization is obsolete, and "may have become a machine uncontrollable by anyone" (95:77). He states that a Secretary of Defense has limited ability to change the Pentagon - because of its large size, and the individual, self-perpetuating nature of major programs inherited by every new secretary (95:21). He criticized the Pentagon as being "too congested for thinking beyond weapons and contingency plans" (95:77). The Secretary of Defense is too busy monitoring committees to think about the relationship between arms and national needs or capacities (95:77).

Department of State

While the Department of State is in a position to hold a lot of power, the nature of its profession often denies the realization of its potential. This lack of power can be attributed to the State Department's lack of a constituency in the American public, and lack of allies in industry or other power centers, which its rivals possess (35:187). The Department of Defense has its natural allies in industry, and along with the CIA, a patriotic appeal to the public

(35:187). The organization of the State Department with embassies dealing with nearly 200 foreign nations and international organizations, compete with each other over what policy to pursue. The result is internal conflict, and an absence of unity in the department (35:188).

Alexander Haig, Reagan's first Secretary of State was an aggressive, ambitious individual whom Reagan appointed because of his experience in foreign affairs and at the urging of some of Reagan's old friends who were impressed with Haig's hard-line reputation and no-nonsense style (3:308). He resigned in June 1982 over a dispute with the National Security Advisor William Clark over Clark's "deep involvement in the foreign policy process, among other things" (6:161). His replacement was George P. Shultz, who would remain the Secretary of State for the remainder of the Reagan presidency. Shultz had served in a variety of cabinet posts in the Nixon and Ford administrations, and brought with him "an extraordinary reputation for judgement and integrity" (3:317). James Reston described him as "the most respected member of the Reagan Cabinet," who "never complains, seldom explains, and never apologizes" (58:A27).

Shultz was more successful influencing foreign policy than Haig, perhaps because of his better reputation. But he also had problems maintaining his position as the primary force in shaping foreign policy in the struggle which occurs in nearly every president's administration between the Secretary of State and the National Security Advisor. Clark

had gained the primary role over Haig, and kept it when Shultz was appointed. His loss of power is due in part to his personality. His methodical, low-key approach and unwillingness to take a firm policy stance resulted in a perceived lack of authority (16:28). A series of personnel changes in the State Department, whose replacements were individuals with ties to the White House and the National Security Council signaled the shift in policy making in favor of the NSC (48:223). Shultz's acquiescence to Clark's choices reinforced the image of the State Department's weakness, and alienated senior members of the Foreign Service who felt the appointments were insulting to the career diplomats (16.28).

Shultz regained power with the appointment of Robert McFarlane as the National Security Advisor. McFarlane lacked the personal ties and thus the influence over President Reagan that Clark had, although his office still issued national security defense directives without departmental approval (48:223).

With the beginning of 1986 and the exit of the assertive McFarlane, Shultz seemed to have gained predominance in the foreign policy arena (69:25). But events in 1986 would show the inconsistency and incoherence of overall foreign policy. Shultz' stand on 'state sponsored terrorism' was met with reservation by Weinberger, although the raid on Libya in retaliation for their terrorist activities was publicly supported. Confusion over

policy towards the Philippines with the fall of Marcos, the lack of preparation for the Reykjavik summit between Reagan and Gorbachev, and the Iran-Contra scandal all signalled the limitations to Shultz' real influence (69:25).

Just a few months before the reflagging situation, President Reagan appointed Frank Carlucci as the National Security Advisor. After the mismanagement of Poindexter, the NSC was in need of reorganizing. Shultz supported Carlucci's design of the NSC (except for its size), and saw the role of the NSC as a coordinating agency which could focus the various departments on the important issues. The role of the National Security Advisor was to be in the White House to continually interact with the President, according to Shultz (86:814).

In early 1987 the Tower Commission Report recommended changes to the structure and process of policymaking with the NSC at the center, a structure that Shultz criticized. Shultz wanted more power in the hands of the Secretary of State, a position that was also taken by other State Department officials (25:A1). Shultz believed that the power of being the principle foreign policy advisor to the President "should be in the hands of accountable people," senior officials who have been nominated and confirmed by the Senate (25:A8). He criticized Carlucci for increasing the staff of the NSC from 62 to 67. Although he had policy differences with Carlucci, the real debate was over "jurisdiction, power, and how policy is to be made and

implemented" (25:A8). When Carlucci conducted high level consultations with leaders of Western Europe, a traditional State Department mission, Shultz objected to the White House. Again, he had the support of his Department, which believed the NSC staff was overstepping its bounds and creating confusion abroad about who was in charge of foreign policy in Washington (25:A1). But Shultz' criticism of Carlucci was not shared by some mid-level State Department officials, who saw Carlucci as "an efficient and fair manager" (25:A8).

The National Security Council

Two National Security Advisors served during the period in which the reflagging occurred, and a total of six served during the Reagan administration. The parade of people through this post signal the problems Reagan had in controlling foreign policy over his two terms. A brief review of the individuals who held the post of National Security Advisor will provide insight into the workings of the Reagan Administration.

The amount of power held by the National Security Advisor was highly dependent on the individual's relationship with the President. During the election campaign of 1980 the conflict between the National Security Advisor and the Secretary of State became an issue, and Reagan directed that the advisor would maintain a low profile and demonstrated this by moving the advisor's office down to the basement of the White House (6:155). Richard V.

Allen, the first National Security Advisor under Reagan did not even have direct access to the President, reporting instead to Edward Meese, who was in charge of domestic policy. William Clark regained some of the power lost by Allen, arranging for daily meetings with the president. He had served as Governor Reagan's chief of staff in California. After he left for the Department of Interior in October 1983, Robert C. McFarlane took over and served until December 1985. While McFarlane was much more of an expert in foreign affairs than Allen or Clark, he lacked the personal relationship with Reagan that Clark had and gave McFarlane a lower stature in the White House. Because of his lower stature, he could not settle differences between Weinberger and Shultz (6:164+). According to Speakes, McFarlane resigned out of the fatigue from "refereeing spats between Shultz and Weinberger and Shultz and the White House" (71:274). His replacement was John Poindexter, another career military officer and deputy director of national security. He was seen by Donald Regan as someone who would be more low key than McFarlane, and a better team player. However, he lacked the political skill to deal with the Congress. His lack of management left the Security Council staff in disarray, because in his desire for secrecy "he wanted everyone to deal with him rather than share information" (29:A18). After Poindexter resigned in November 1986 over the diversion of funds to the Contras, Frank Carlucci was appointed. Carlucci had a wide ranging

background in economic, social, and defense related governmental agencies, as well as experience as the president of Sears World Trade, credentials which more than qualified him to be the National Security Advisor (71:276+).

According to Ignatius, "the National Security Council was the seat of the Reagan administration's disorganization and failure in foreign policy" (38:179). The Council was unable to produce "an interagency consensus on foreign policy" and thus could not carry out its basic function: "soliciting policy proposals from the various cabinet departments and agencies, refining them into clear options for presidential decision, and then imposing the decisions on the bureaucracy" (38:180). Had it not been for Carlucci, the NSC would have still been a disorganized and ineffective organization during the reflagging situation.

The Decision

Unlike the Cuban Missile Crisis, which was decided in a matter of a few weeks, the decision to reflag the tankers was made four months after the initial inquiry from Kuwait to the U.S., and another five months before implementation of the decision. Power struggles over the policy would continue for another year after implementation. Obviously, the threat to U.S. national security was much lower than the threat posed by the Cuban Missile Crisis. Consequently, the means to achieve the objectives of the reflagging policy underwent longer debate than a crisis situation would allow.

Although the President decided on March 4, 1987 to reflag the Kuwaiti tankers, some bureaucratic procedures had to take place before the tankers could come under the American flag. Separate inspection and documentation applications had to be approved by the United States Coast Guard (USCG) before reflagging could occur. These procedures required the vessels to be under ownership by a U.S. citizen or a corporation with 51 percent of its directors and operating officers U.S. citizens (83:41,90). The Kuwait Government formed the Chesapeake Shipping Company of Dover Delaware for the purpose of the reflagging. The eleven tankers owned by Chesapeake came from the government-run Kuwait Oil Tanker Company, which is responsible for oil shipments to and from Kuwait. The first vessels were not inspected until May and June (79:280). Documentation applications were not processed until July, and the first escort did not occur until July 22, 1987. Had it not been for the Stark incident, these bureaucratic processes may have proceeded in relative obscurity.

In this case, the slowness of the bureaucratic machinery allowed for public discussion and Congressional opposition to and influence over implementing the decision. To find out how the decision was made and what bureaucratic machinery was involved the early stages of the situation must be examined.

The initial Kuwaiti request came in the form of an inquiry to the USCG as to the requirements of the U.S. law

governing reflagging. The request was considered to be routine by the Coast Guard. Rear Admiral John W. Kime, chief, Office of Marine Safety, Security and Environmental Protection, USCG, stated the Coast Guard handled the request in a "business-as-usual" manner (83:86). Richard L. Armitage, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs summed up the routine nature of the request before the Senate Armed Services Committee:

The Kuwaitis approached the Coast Guard on December 10 and asked for information about reflagging. They did not indicate anything unusual and it was treated in a very normal manner by the Coast Guard. (88:93)

He went on to say that 50 ships over the past four or five years had been reflagged by the Coast Guard, so it was not seen as an unusual request. He added:

And so the Coast Guard treated it very routinely and it never reached any policy level. It was not until December 23, when the Kuwaiti Oil Company indicated to the embassy in Kuwait that they had an interest in reflagging, that any policy level awareness came to this at all. (88:93)

Initially then, the request worked its way through the Coast Guard "bureaucracy" for two weeks, then was made again to the State Department, and passed on to the Defense Department. Then on January 29, 1987 in Armitage's words, "we replied to the Kuwaitis that we could reflag or charter if the Kuwaitis met U.S. requirements" (88:93).

A chronology given in a report by Senator John Glenn to the majority leader of the Senate, gives more insight into the initial handling of the request. The December 10 and

December 23 actions are reiterated, but additionally, on December 25 the USCG informed the Kuwait Oil Tanker Company (KOTC) of reflagging requirements. Then the USCG sent KOTC reflagging information on January 12, 1987, and on the 13th of January, the Government of Kuwait asked the U.S. embassy if reflagged Kuwaiti-owned vessels would receive U.S. Navy protection. On the same day, the U.S. Government learned of a similar offer from the Soviet Union to Kuwait (87:10+). The Glenn report also confirms the actions of January 29, while the Congressional Digest chronology confirms the January 13 and January 29 actions (56:293).

In this early chronology of events, it is evident that the decision to reflag has already passed through three different organizations - the Coast Guard, the State and Defense Departments by the end of December 1986. In mid-January the request was discussed in high level meetings at the White House with representatives from State, Defense, the CIA, and other agencies (93:10).

Both the Glenn and Weinberger reports state that on February 6 the U.S. responded to Kuwait's question of January 13 that reflagged vessels would receive U.S. Navy protection. Also during February, interagency policy level meetings were held at the White House on "Middle East and Gulf issues" (93:Table 1). Then in late February, the U.S. learned of a Soviet agreement to reflag or charter Kuwaiti vessels (87:11; 93:Table 1). Kuwait then offered, on March 2, to reflag six vessels under U.S. flag, and five under the

Soviet flag. On March 4, at a meeting with Carlucci, Weinberger, and Shultz, President Reagan "decided to accede to Kuwait's request to protect its tankers and provide a naval escort if Kuwait would deny the Soviet Union access to port facilities" (72:148). It is not clear whether this offer from the President would allow the Soviets to protect five Kuwaiti vessels, but Kuwait rejected the conditions. On March 7, the U.S. offered to reflag all eleven of the vessels in question, and Kuwait accepted the offer on March 10.

At this point in the chronology, the decision has been made by President Reagan and his administration to reflag the Kuwaiti tankers and provide Naval protection. According to the chronologies, no players outside of the administration are involved until a March 12 offer by the State Department Legislative Affairs to provide a detailed briefing of the reflagging offer to the staffers of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittees on Europe and the Middle East (87:11; 93:Table 1).

A Rational Act?

In analyzing the March 4 decision by President Reagan, evidence does exist to justify Model I. Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Armitage described the decision using a rational approach, in which the risks of granting the Kuwaiti request and refusing the Kuwaiti request were weighed against one another, and the conclusion reached was

that "not to accede to their request had a down side that was greater than the risk incurred in the protection of 11 reflagged vessels" (88:83). President Reagan's own description of his decision-making style also describes a rational approach: "When I've heard all I need to make a decision...I don't take a vote. I make the decision" (18:33). In Martin Anderson's words: "the choices had to be laid before him, along with the nature of the problem, the alternative courses of action, and the costs and benefits of each of those alternatives" (3:220). All of this points to a rational approach which Model I describes.

But while the decision may lend itself to this rational approach, the model cannot explain the events which occurred before and after the decision was made, which is part of the policy-making process.

Under the assumptions of this model, the U.S. government would be a rational, unified actor, with specified goals, which could be arranged in priority. The most important goal of the administration in the Persian Gulf was to deny the Soviet Union "either direct control or increased influence over the region or any of its states" (82:25). In testimony regarding this objective's importance to the decision, Assistant Secretary of State Murphy added:

When the decision was made in March by the President, this is the first reason. When his decision was made, it was made against the background of knowledge that if we did not undertake, or accept the registering under the American flag of these 11 tankers, the Soviet Union was prepared to do so. (82:25)

But reflagging the tankers was disputed as a logical means to countering the Soviet presence in the region. The Arab mistrust of Soviet intentions in the region, which were heightened by the Afghanistan invasion, minimized the possible gains the U.S.S.R. could make in the Gulf (85:43). The open U.S. opposition to Iran in the Gulf actually aided Soviet efforts to improve diplomatic relations with Iran. The Soviet-Iranian Permanent Commission for Joint Economic Cooperation signed an agreement for repair of gas and oil pipelines through the Soviet Union and for the establishment of a rail line in August 1987 (59:125+). At the time of the decision policymakers knew that the Soviets already had a small naval presence in the Gulf, and that the Kuwaitis wanted protection from the USSR in the form of charters.

Policymakers also knew that reflagging would not ensure the free flow of oil, since less than one percent of the oil transiting the Gulf would be carried by these tankers. And the Gulf was no longer as critical to oil export as in the past because of the increased use of pipelines (85:42). Iran, in fact, was more dependent on the Gulf for oil export than Iraq. And they knew that no real threat existed to the world oil market, which had experienced a glut even during the tanker war.

Freedom of navigation was also not protected by reflagging eleven Kuwaiti tankers, when over 600 vessels of all flags transited the Gulf monthly, and the policy was strictly limited to U.S. flag vessels only (85:43).

The threat of Iranian expansion in the Gulf states was more in the form of internal subversion, and terrorism (59:126). Militarily, the greatest threat of Iranian expansion was in the fall of Iraq, which did not even use the Gulf for oil export. Colonel Harry G. Summers saw Iran as a more serious threat to stability in the region than the Soviets. He testified that not only could Iran overrun the Kuwaitis, but if Iraq collapsed, no other power in the area could counterbalance the Iranian force (86:742+). A naval presence may have been moral support for the Gulf States, but would do nothing to counter the land movements of Iran.

Logically, the use of reflagging to achieve the U.S. objectives in the region was heavily disputed. The intricacies of the response to the reflagging request makes the use of Model I ineffective. It could be used, from a broader perspective, if details were not known on how the request was handled and who was involved. This is one of the strengths of Model I, for it does not require detailed information about the inner workings of a government to explain its actions (35:58). But even this research effort, without access to the conversations between high level officials at policy review meetings, can still analyze the available facts at a more involved level. The evidence available, in the testimony and correspondence of key actors in the event allow us to look deeper into the workings of the black box of the United States government.

Evidence of a Bureaucracy

The law itself may have begun the bureaucratic process of making the decision. Assistant Secretary of State Murphy stated that the law dealing with reflagging requests provides for automatic reflagging upon application by another country, so the USCG had no choice but to proceed with the request once it was made (82:25+). Secretary Weinberger also testified that the reflagging is an "automatic procedure", and "If they want to put eleven under, it is their right, and it is obviously our right to refuse if the ships don't meet our basic standards" (79:137,163,166). In talking about the law, Weinberger stated: "...the statute does not give any authority, as I understand it, to refuse to reflag when a request comes in and the ship meets the standard" (79:152).

The automatic nature of the procedure can be seen in a letter to Mr. Tim Stafford, the Manager Fleet Development of KOTC from Captain James C. Card, Chief, Merchant Vessel Inspection and Documentation Division. The letter states "Subsequent to your letter of April 24, 1987, you decided to bring the eleven Kuwait Oil Tanker Company vessels under U.S. flag," which indicates the process was actually started by Kuwait's decision to request protection (83:147, my emphasis). Once started, the process could run itself.

Additional evidence of the bureaucratic nature of the reflagging can be seen in the answer to a written question submitted to the Departments of State and Defense and the

U.S. Coast Guard by the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East:

Reflagging is basically a technical process carried out between the requesting party and the U.S. Coast Guard and distinct from any operational decision by the U.S. military about protection of U.S. flag vessels. (79:279)

Model II, the organizational process model is supported by the actions of the USCG. The Coast Guard is responsible for reflagging foreign ships with the U.S. flag, and coordinating this effort was done by standard operating procedure. The behavior of the U.S. would be determined by the output of the organization, the Coast Guard, following this well-defined procedure, the law. They responded to the request according to the law, and had the Kuwait government not made the request to the embassy, the USCG would have proceeded with the reflagging regardless of the desires of the Secretary of Defense or the President. As mentioned above, over 50 ships had been reflagged between 1981 and 1985. Four of these ships have operated in the Persian Gulf, but did not receive U.S. Navy protection. They are privately owned, and the policy of protecting privately owned ships was not enacted until January 1986 (79:163). These reflaggings did not receive the attention that the Kuwaiti reflaggings received, either because of the nature of their ownership (evidently the DoD did not consider the Kuwaiti tankers to be privately owned) or the situation surrounding the requests. Certainly the actions of the

Kuwaiti government were designed partly to bring higher level attention to the situation, as part of their effort to end the Iran-Iraq war.

Weinberger influenced the USCG by requesting a waiver from some of the requirements of inspection law in the interests of national security. According to Rear Admiral John W. Kime, U.S. Coast Guard, Chief, Office of Marine Safety, Security and Environmental Protection, "the act of December 27, 1950, C. 1155, 64 Stat. 1120 authorizes waivers of navigation and vessel inspection laws in the interest of national defense and requires the Coast Guard to grant such a request" (83:78). Again, the Coast Guard response to this "request" from the Secretary of Defense, was in accordance with standard operating procedures - "granted in accordance with Title 46, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 6.01" (99).

Admiral Kime summed up the reaction of the Coast Guard saying: "...what we have done is by statutory mandate and we have established no new procedures or policies in doing this. Everything that we have done has been in accordance with existing law and practice" (83:83+).

A number of other organizational responses to the decision to reflag the Kuwaiti tankers came from the U.S. Merchant Marines, labor organizations, and the Federal Communications Commission.

John Gaughan, Administrator, Maritime Administration (MARAD), did not believe that the reflagging ran counter to

the Merchant Marine Act of 1936, which states that "the United States Government must foster the development and encourage the maintenance of a merchant marine" (83:85+). MARAD is the organization under the Department of Transportation responsible for administering sections 9 and 41 of the Shipping Act of 1916, which govern the charter or transfer of shipping to a foreign interest after placement under the U.S. flag (83:79). The Kuwaiti request was handled in accordance with the law and treated by MARAD "the same way we would treat any other request for such approval" (83:79).

Raymond T. McKay, President of District 2, Marine Engineers Beneficial Association-Associated Maritime Officers, AFL-CIO, wrote letters to the Secretaries of Transportation and Defense in opposition to the reflagging. The Merchant Marine industry was in a depressed state with nearly 40 ships lying idle and many American mariners unemployed. McKay argued that the interests of the U.S. Maritime Industry were not served by reflagging Kuwaiti vessels with American flags, that Maritime Industry leaders were not consulted, and that the laws concerning registry of vessels under the U.S. flag can only be waived "in accordance with the Congressional intent, the statute, and administrative procedure" (88:116+).

But while opposed to the reflagging itself, the Marine Engineers did support the goals of the Reagan administration in the Persian Gulf. The conflict was over the means to

achieving those goals, as the political-process model predicts.

Frank Drozak, President of the Seafarers International Union also opposed the action for ignoring the maritime laws. The laws governing U.S. flag vessels state that 75 percent of the unlicensed crew must be American citizens and all licensed officers must be American citizens if they call on U.S. ports. But a provision in the law also allows American flagged vessels which do not use U.S. ports to replace U.S. citizen crew members with foreign crew members provided the captain is American and the operator is "deprived of U.S. citizen personnel" (83:109). The position of the administration was that the ships never call on U.S. ports, so the provision justifies the foreign crews of the Kuwaiti tankers. Drozak contented that the citizenship provision is over 100 years old and was designed for emergency crew replacement situations, only for the amount of time it would take for a replacement to travel to the ships location (83:109). Drozak also protested the decision on the grounds that members of the union were willing to serve on the tankers, available to serve, and best suited to the dangerous conditions to serve the national interests of the nation (83:110). Again we can see the objections to the means of the reflagging policy - not the overall goals of the policy. The union was naturally favorable towards an agreement that would bring more business for its members.

Talmage Simpkins, in representing Shannon J. Wall, President, National Maritime Union, believed the reflagging would "adversely affect the American-flag merchant marine and U.S. citizen seamen now and in the future," because waiving the law "makes a farce of our ownership, manning, construction, and safety requirements standards" (83:113).

Capt Robert J. Lowen, President of the International Organization of Masters, Mates and Pilots, ILA, AFL-CIO, whose members were chosen to be the American masters for the Kuwaiti tankers, attested to the ability of those members to operate the vessels efficiently, and that they would "without hesitation, respond to any contingency or emergency in a way that reflects the best interests and desires of the United States" (83:228). His organizational viewpoint can be seen in his later statement: "we are obligated by our own oaths of office to promote and protect our members' jobs and their working and retirement standards" (83:228).

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) also played an organizational role in the reflagging case. The Chief, Aviation and Marine Branch issued exemptions for all eleven of the tankers from the radiotelegraph requirements of the Communications Act and the Safety Convention. Mr Ralph A. Haller, Deputy Chief, Private Radio Bureau, FCC, stated that the action was taken "under delegated authority, treating it as a routine request for exemption from the radiotelegraph provisions of the Safety Convention and the Communications Act" (83:96+). The Department of the Navy had no objection to this exemption, as long as the radio operator was fully

qualified and English speaking, but not necessarily an American citizen (83:98,241).

In all of these reactions to the reflagging the response was always done in accordance with pre-established law or policy for that organization. The behavior of the United States following Model II's reasoning, would be determined by the outputs of these organizations reacting to the Kuwaiti request. The organization's role is emphasized in the above reactions.

But in the objections raised by the labor organizations, there still exists a sharing of values and conflict over the means to the goal as stated in Model IV. Not one of the organizations opposed the presence of the U.S. in the region. They did oppose the use of foreign crews and foreign vessels to transport the oil, because those means to achieve the stated goals ran counter to the interests of their members.

And in the decision to use foreign crews and foreign vessels we see a difference in the amount of power held by the various organizations to influence the decision. While it would be beneficial to the U.S. economy to use American crews and ships, the importance and urgency of protecting national interests took precedence. Marion Creekmore, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs stated:

We were dealing here with an issue of high strategic importance. The commercial interest is obviously always important. But in something like this, to try to put it as a condition of our

working together with the Kuwaitis for something that we thought advanced major American interests did not seem to be the appropriate approach at the time, nor would I think it was the appropriate approach today. (83:46)

And Philip Haseltine, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Transportation for Policy and International Affairs testified that "the major issue was not the impact on U.S. maritime policy," but was a decision "made on national security and defense grounds" (83:55). And on these grounds, the Secretaries of State and Defense were more powerful. To require the Kuwaitis to hire American seamen, and enter into commercial charter arrangements would have taken more time and would have been a more complex procedure to get the end result. The administration did not want to risk Kuwait's rejection of U.S. protection over a less important issue. The Kuwaitis desired a reflagging arrangement, and perhaps more importantly to the administration, they were already negotiating with the Soviets. Given these conditions, the President, Secretary of State, and Secretary of Defense wanted to reach an agreement in the quickest way possible - which meant reflagging using foreign crews and foreign vessels. The proximity to the President enjoyed by the Secretaries of State and Defense gave them more power and influence over the means to reflagging than the organizations opposed to those means.

Model II does explain to some degree the reactions of some of the organizations, but cannot be used to explain the

overall decision to reflag the tankers. The President's actions are certainly one of the biggest snags to the use of Model II, not because they are unpredictable, but because the President is not tied to a formal organization with standard operating procedures to follow. The President's power and influence cannot be underestimated as "the President chooses most of the important players and sets the rules" (44:229). And President Reagan in particular, paid more attention to the selection of appointees than any President in the recent past (18:34). The model also fails to explain the overlapping nature of the State and Defense Departments, evident from the testimony from members of each Department on the event. On numerous occasions, Secretary of Defense Weinberger is asked about issues that pertain to the State Department, such as policy aspects of the reflagging, the consistency of U.S. policy, reasons behind the reflagging policy, and Soviet diplomatic efforts, all questions that infringe on the State Department's territory. Similarly, the State Department often provided answers to Congressional questions about military issues.

The division among the Joint Chiefs of Staff is also hard to explain by Model II. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff supported all of the objectives of the reflagging policy given by the administration. In his testimony before the House Committee on Foreign Affairs on 10 June 1987, Admiral Crowe stated that the U.S. had vital interests in the free flow of the region's oil, should

continue to develop good relations with the Gulf States, and push for an early end to the Iran-Iraq war. Therefore, Admiral Crowe stated, the Soviet Union should not be allowed direct control or increased influence in the region. He also believed in the ability of the military to carry out the mission required by the reflagging agreement (79:132+).

However, there were mixed signals from other high ranking military officials. According to The New York Times, their concern was over the open-ended nature of the reflagging policy - how long it would take and where it would lead to (74:A6). And while Robert Hall, a spokesman for the National Security Council declared that the JCS "were involved in the decision-making process from the beginning and fully supported the move," another admiral was quoted as stating that the JCS were not really involved in the decision "or even asked their opinion on it" (74:A6).

Vice Admiral Powell F. Carter, Jr., U.S. Navy, Director of the JCS, reaffirmed that the JCS were not asked for their position on the policy itself, but only on the military feasibility of the action (88:92). He stated that normally the JCS is not asked for policy advice, and that as a corporate body the JCS does not discuss policy implications, only military requirements. Admiral Crowe, however, did mention political and military objectives of the policy in his statements before Congress (88:15+; 79:132+). Crowe, a strong supporter of the Arab states, encouraged Weinberger to bolster the U.S. position in the Gulf despite strong

reservations from the Navy (74:A20). Another member of the JCS, Gen P. X. Kelly, USMC, supported the reflagging, given the available options (74:A6).

The conflict within the JCS can be seen in the above statements. Crowe's actions support model IV because his set of values influenced how he reacted. He had lived in the Middle East from 1966 to 1977, and was impressed "by how many Arab friends we have and how resilient our ties with the Arab world are" (79:133).

The Bureaucratic Argument

Model III, the bureaucratic politics model and Model IV, the political process model are very similar in explaining the actions of nations. The degree of importance attached to the organization and the individual player is where these two models essentially differ. Model III places the organization as the most important factor and influence on policy. The outcome of the policy is not always what was intended by the participants, but some unintentional compromise between the goals of the conflicting parties results. Model IV views the individual as more important than the organization, with the individual's ideologies and perspectives more important than his organizational viewpoint. And the political-process model assumes that the participants do have control over the outcome of political struggles, and choose their strategies with a specific goal in mind.

The agreement that existed among the Reagan administration officials in this case neither refutes nor verifies Model III or Model IV. There were very few instances of public disagreement over the policy among the individual leaders of President Reagan's administration. Information on the discussions which took place at high level meetings would help to clarify the differences in opinions between the department heads.

But Model III also does not explain the similarities between the viewpoints of the State and Defense Departments. The heads of these two departments do not reflect the stereotypic character of their organizations. While Weinberger took more of a hardline approach to the Soviets than Shultz, he was more reluctant to use force than the Secretary of State. Weinberger clashed with Shultz and McFarlane on the early withdrawal of forces from Lebanon in 1984, with the Secretary of Defense taking the uncharacteristic "dovish" stance (48:233). In a speech in which he laid out six guidelines on the use of force, Weinberger stressed that the military option is not always appropriate (94).

And Shultz took a more hardline approach to terrorism than Secretary of Defense Weinberger (96:234). In testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Shultz stated:

Improvements in our ability to project power abroad have helped us protect our vital interests and defend our friends against subversion and aggression. And our willingness to use that power when necessary - as against Libya, as a last resort after years of Qaddafi's terrorism - has

sent a powerful signal to friends and enemies alike. (86:809+)

According to Head, Shultz has been a proponent of the use of military force since 1981. Shultz's position "stresses that military forces need to be used as instruments of national policy in political-military crises as well as in combating terrorism" (33:75).

Model III fails to account for "the effect which the President has in choosing his advisors, establishing their access to decision-making, and influencing bureaucratic interests" (44:229). It does not place enough importance on President Reagan's personal ideologies, or the effect of Congress, American public opinion, and domestic politics on the policy. In short, the political-process model is much more complete in dealing with the facts surrounding this major policy decision.

A Political Process

The actions of the players in the reflagging decision validate the first assumption of the political process model developed by Hilsman, that "there are a wide variety of people involved in the making of government decisions" (35:74+). President Reagan's management style ensures that many people are involved in a decision. His style is described by many sources. Larry Speakes described Reagan as a listener in Cabinet and staff meetings, and would hear what his Cabinet officers had to say before making a decision (71:304). Anderson states that Reagan rarely went

on only one person's advice, but would encourage each person to speak their mind on an issue during meetings (3:310). And Speakes characterized decision meetings as containing "plenty of give and take" (71:304).

In this case, the President consulted with two department head secretaries, and the National Security Advisor in making the decision (72:146), but the CIA, Department of Transportation and the Coast Guard had already become involved. After the decision, Congress and special interest groups (the Maritime Unions) also became involved.

Model IV's second assumption, that players have power, both as individuals and organizations, power which is unequally distributed depending on the subject matter and the circumstances is also verified by the case.

By 1987, Weinberger and Shultz were the two individuals Reagan relied on the most in foreign policy matters. Not only had they been with Reagan the longest during his presidency, but they had also escaped the web of the Iran-Contra scandal that forced some of his aides to resign, and thus weaken his base of advisors. In fact, their documented rejection of the idea of selling arms to Iran before it became public may have actually improved their public favor.

In general, these two advisors did have their differences, the two biggest being their approach to East-West relations and their willingness to use force. Depending on the source, the extent of their differences varies. Speakes stated that they "were constantly at odds

over foreign policy" while Williams stated that the differences between the State Department and Defense Department were "less dramatic" after Shultz's appointment as Secretary of State (71:264; 96:234). Another author stated that there were consistent fights between the two and they ensured that both sides of a foreign policy issue would be heard by the President (18:38). But neither Secretary dominated in winning President Reagan's approval, which "reflects not only Reagan's substantive preferences on the individual issues but his general desire to maintain a balance between his senior advisors" (96:234).

In the decision to reflag the tankers Shultz and Weinberger seemed to put their differences aside. Shultz was enthusiastic over the administration's reflagging policy (25:A8). He was critical of Iran's unwillingness to negotiate an end to the war, and favored improved relations with the Gulf states. He also argued against the application of the War Powers Resolution in a May 20, 1987 letter to the Speaker of the House (79:307).

Weinberger testified often before the Congress in support of the policy. His support for a military role in the reflagging surprised many people, because of his beliefs on tempering the use of force (74:A6). Weinberger's reaction to the Kuwaiti request shows that his fundamental distrust of the Soviet Union took precedence. According to a senior Pentagon official, hearing of Kuwait's intention to flag half of their fleet under the Soviet flag, "was the

fuse that exploded Cap Weinberger" (74:A20). The Iran-Iraq war and the Iran-Contra scandal also influenced Weinberger's stance on reflagging. A Pentagon official cited by Trainor stated that Weinberger saw an opportunity to restore good relations with Arab states in the Gulf, which had been damaged by the Iran-contra scandal, while frustrating Iranian and Russian ambitions in the region, and not affecting Arab-Israeli relations (74:A20).

In speaking of the formal and informal processes to making foreign policy, Weinberger stated he has informal meetings daily with the JCS and formal meetings weekly, and formal meetings with the Secretary of State twice a week, and many other informal meetings with him (86:17).

Shultz described the formal process as starting with papers prepared through the NSC which are discussed by various interagency groups and signed by the President. But he also stated that the informal gatherings in which people "discuss issues and share ideas" is just as important as the formal process (86:813). Additionally, he describes the concept of the "working breakfast", in which the President meets daily with key advisors and discusses prepared subjects (86:814), just as President Reagan did when he met with his advisors on March 4, 1987 and made the decision to reflag (72:148).

The Congressional - Executive Battle

Hilsman's statement that "policy disagreements are more frequently over means than goals" is also verified by the

case in the actions of the two major players involved in making foreign policy, the President and Congress (35:76).

While everyone on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs supported the U.S. presence in the Gulf, and the vital and strategic interests there, they did not agree that reflagging was the proper response to the situation (82:29+). Chartering U.S. tankers as an alternative to reflagging was proposed by members of Congress as a better solution but the administration held fast to the reflagging policy (79:194+). Another disagreement over the policy came when the Congress voted to delay the reflagging to better prepare for the risk involved; nevertheless the administration proceeded with the reflagging (82:35+).

The struggle between Congress and the administration is the most illustrative of the political nature of foreign policymaking. After the 1986 Congressional elections, the Republicans had lost control of the Senate, and "power appeared to move from the White House to Capital Hill and, within Congress to a new set of leaders known to be independent men" (34:20). Although the decision had been made early by the President, its non-crisis nature resulted in extensive debate on the implementation of the policy.

After the Stark incident, questions were being asked by the American public on the role of the U.S. in the Gulf. Both representative Peter Kostmayer of Pennsylvania and Edward Feighan of Ohio found the American people to be "very skeptical about flagging Kuwaiti vessels" (79:148,156).

The War Powers Issue. The most important issue between the President and Congress was the applicability of the War Powers Resolution to this situation. The means supported by the Reagan Administration for achieving all of the objectives of the policy resulted in the use of military force, and this raised the question in Congress of who was in charge of making this policy. The War Powers Resolution was passed on November 7, 1973 over the veto of President Nixon. It limited the President's war-making ability by requiring him to consult Congress "in every possible instance" before introducing troops into hostile situations, report to Congress within 48 hours of the introduction of armed forces into a hostile situation, and terminate the use of American armed forces in the hostile region within 60 days (or 90 days if Congress gives him a 30 day extension), unless Congress has authorized use of that force for a longer period (89:60-63). No president since has recognized the constitutionality of the resolution, even though they have filed "reports" with the Congress on numerous occasions when military forces were introduced into a hostile situation (37:380-383).

Briefly, the most contested provisions of the War Powers Resolution are as follows:

Sec 2a. "the collective judgement of both the Congress and the President will apply to the introduction of United States Armed Forces into hostilities..."

Sec 2c. The president may introduce armed forces into "situations where imminent involvement in

hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances", only when there exists "(1) a declaration of war, (2) specific statutory authorization, or (3) a national emergency created by attack upon the United States..."

Sec 3. "the President in every possible instance shall consult with Congress before introducing United States Armed Forces into hostilities...."

Sec 4(a). Within 48 hours of the introduction of United States Armed Forces into a hostile situation, the President will report to Congress on "the circumstances necessitating the introduction," "the Constitutional and legislative authority" the President is acting under, and "the estimated scope and duration" of the action.

Sec 5(b). Within 60 calendar days of the report or requirement thereof, "the President shall terminate any use of American Armed Forces with respect to which such report was submitted" unless the Congress has declared war, extended the 60 day period, or cannot meet because of an attack on the United States.

Executive Position. On May 20th, members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee demanded Congressional notification of the plan according to the War Powers Act. Richard W. Murphy, Assistant Secretary of State, said that "our intent is to deter, not provoke, further military action," and since the War Powers Act was meant to give control to Congress over military action, it should not be invoked (13:A12). Among the president's staff, Chief of Staff Howard Baker, Secretary of the Treasury James Baker 3rd, and Attorney General Edwin Meese urged the president to notify Congress under the War Powers Act. Secretary of Defense Weinberger and Secretary of State Shultz and lawyers persuaded the president otherwise. The "party line" of the administration can be seen in a State department letter sent

by J. Edward Fox, Assistant Secretary for Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs to Clairborne Pell (D, N.J.), Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. In the letter, Fox states that the War Powers Resolution did not apply because "This is not a situation where imminent involvement of U.S. Armed Forces in hostilities is clearly indicated by the circumstances" (84:7). So while the President's staff was split on the War Powers question, he naturally leaned toward those individuals and organizations most influential and experienced in defense and foreign affairs, two key issues of the policy. His alignment with the departments of State and Defense, departments which hold more power over foreign affairs than the Chief of Staff, Treasury Department, or the Attorney General, supports Hilsman's concept of the President's need to build powerful coalitions. The individuals in those positions, Weinberger and Shultz, had become highly influential in Reagan's foreign policy directorate (3:317).

The CIA played a low key role in the whole situation, possibly due to the newness of its director, William Webster, appointed after the May 7, 1987 death of William Casey, or the publicity over the Iran-Contra affair. Overall, the President's main power centers were not appreciably divided over this issue. But the opposition from Congress did have an effect. Even though Assistant Secretary of State Murphy stated on May 19, 1987 that the reflagging would begin in a few weeks, the administration

postponed the operation until late July, perhaps due to the Congressional opposition to the policy.

Congressional Action. In Congress, the shock of the attack on the Stark brought sharp criticism. It took the Senate four days to vote 91 to 5 requiring the Administration to report to Congress on the Persian Gulf situation before the reflagging began. The fact that the demand was co-sponsored by the leaders of both parties, Democrat Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia, and Republican Robert Dole of Kansas, sent a message of strong Congressional opposition to the administration (62:A1).

On June 2nd, the House voted 302 to 105 requiring the Reagan Administration to report to Congress on how it would protect the U.S. warships and the reflagged vessels. Hilsman's statement that conflicts are over the means, not the goals can be applied here. In principle, the Congress appeared united on the issue of the War Powers Resolution. They all shared the goal of limiting the President's war-making powers, but they conflicted on the means to accomplish this, and it showed in their failure to pass any strong legislation. The split manifested itself along party lines. Prominent Democrats Sam Nunn (Ga) and Les Aspin (Wis), both chairmen of the Armed Services Committees of the House and Senate were strongly opposed to the reflagging. Nunn wanted to delay the plan and consider leasing tankers instead of reflagging. He was concerned that in reflagging the U.S. was leaning toward Iraq in the war, and a U.S.-

Iranian conflict would drive Iran to improve relations with the Soviet Union. In the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, a bill was passed on June 30 for Senate consideration by a vote of 11 to 8, along party lines, requiring the President to explain how the escort ships would defend themselves.

Nearly all of the legislation introduced regarding the War Powers Act was done by Democrats. On July 1, a Senate resolution was blocked by Republicans. On July 24, Senator Dale Bumpers (D, Ark), introduced legislation calling for an end to the escort operation in six months unless directly approved by Congress. This bill was much weaker than the War Powers Resolution in allowing the President six months instead of 60 days to complete the action, but it was defeated on September 18 by a vote of 50 to 41. On September 24, Senate Majority Leader Robert Byrd (D, W.Va), cited an attack by a U.S. helicopter on a mine-laying Iranian vessel as proof that hostilities had occurred, fulfilling the requirements of the War Powers Act. He introduced an amendment to limit the U.S. - Kuwaiti tanker escorts, but could not get the amendment to pass without significantly watering it down. The final version which passed on October 21, merely stated that in 90 days, the Senate would consider the possibility of invoking the War Powers Resolution (21:A3). The battle continued for nearly the length of the entire conflict. On June 6, 1988, only ten weeks before the end of the Iran-Iraq war, the Senate

blocked by 54 to 31, a proposal by yet another democrat, Brock Adams of Washington, to invoke the War Powers Resolution.

But there were signs of a "strain toward agreement" between these two power centers. In the House, the bill which passed on June 2, mentioned above, represented a compromise on the part of Congress, by allowing the reflagging to proceed, while the Executive agreed to provide a report after the reflagging agreement was reached (12:A1). And when twelve members of the House Armed Services Committee - four Republicans and eight Democrats - returned from a visit with four of the Gulf States in July 1987, they opposed a reversal of the administration policy due to the harm that could result to American credibility in the Gulf (10:A3). They had subordinated their desire to limit the President to the larger goal of improving American credibility.

After the attack of a reflagged vessel in October 1987, Congressional response to the President's decision to retaliate was supportive. Senator Nunn stated his support of the President's decision to respond, as did Speaker of the House Jim Wright. One reason for this support from Democrats may have been the President's effort to inform Congressional leaders of the event before it had taken place, even to the point of agreeing to submit a report to Congress within 48 hours of the action. The President had come a long way in approaching the requirements of the War

Powers Resolution, while not agreeing to invoke it entirely. According to White House spokesman Marlin Fitzwater, the prior notification was in response to criticism from Congress of their lack of knowledge of the Libyan raid in 1986 (26:A10). The President's ability to compromise while holding onto his power, diffused the backing the hard liners of War Powers received from their colleagues in Congress.

VII. Final Conclusion

This research was done to apply decision-making theory to foreign policy-making in order to better understand the process. The reflagging of the Kuwaiti tankers was used as an event to study decision-making. Many decisions are made in formulating national security policy, and thus conceptual models can be applied to policy-making events. The models used in this research were the rational actor model, the organizational-process model, the bureaucratic-politics model, and the political-process model.

The terms decision-making and policy-making are used interchangeably. While the word decision is defined as "a final conclusion or choice," policy is defined as "a general principle or plan that guides the actions taken by a person or group" (2:184,530). Policy, then, is an overall goal which requires many decisions to support and implement. Sometimes the decisions made in the name of a policy neither support nor implement the policy in the intended manner (35:62). In this case a hierarchy of policy came into play. The U.S. policy of containment of the Soviet Union certainly guided the actions of the key players in the case. Below that policy is the U.S. policy towards the Persian Gulf, which guides the decision makers on a more specific, regional level than the policy of containment. The U.S. policy in the Persian Gulf in 1987-1988 was adopted from the Carter doctrine, which claimed the Gulf as an area of vital

interest to the U.S., and stated our resolve to use force if necessary to defend those interests. Falling under the Persian Gulf policy is the reflagging policy, which is even more specific in guiding U.S. action. Only eleven Kuwaiti ships were covered by this policy. Other policies supported the Persian Gulf policy as well - the policy towards the Iran - Iraq war for instance - and together, these smaller policies guide the decisions made concerning the region.

To support the policy of reflagging, the key players had to make smaller decisions - increase the U.S. naval presence, use foreign crews and vessels, request a waiver from certain reflagging requirements, and so forth to support the policy. But these smaller decisions were also guided or made necessary by the president's decision to reflag the tankers. In that respect, the words decision and policy are used for the same purpose.

The decision to reflag the tankers was made by the President during the breakfast meeting on March 4, 1987 in council with his top-level advisors - the Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of State, and the National Security Advisor. But focusing on that meeting alone would overlook the policy-making process that took place before and after the March 4 meeting. When the Stark incident focused national attention on the situation, much debate occurred over the wisdom of the decision. Much of the struggle for power between organizations and individuals occurred during this debate.

Because the event was not threatening the national security of the U.S., the magnitude of the decision was not overwhelming. This fact has a larger effect on the policy-making process than on the decision-makers themselves. The process was stretched out by the non-crisis nature of the situation. In fact, the decision was not questioned for over two months by Congress, until the Stark incident raised the situation's importance. Still, two more months passed before the first tanker was reflagged.

The alternatives facing the primary decision-makers (the President and his advisors) were limited by the objectives of the policy of containment and policy in the Persian Gulf. Since the Kuwaitis initially inquired about a reflagging operation, proceeding with that concept was the quickest means for the U.S. to counter the Soviet presence. Whether the Kuwaitis would have accepted another type of agreement, such as chartering of U.S. merchant ships, is doubtful because of Kuwait's increasing fear of an Iranian victory in the war with Iraq. Operation Staunch had been in effect for at least three years and was still only moderately effective, due to the large number of sources providing the Iranians with arms. The escalation of the Gulf war, and the Iranian offensive in January 1987 were events pressuring the decision-makers to act quickly. Additionally, the Soviet agreement with Kuwait in early March increased the pressure on the Reagan administration. Domestically, the administration was in a state of crisis

from the effects of the Iran-Contra affair. These pressures and the limited number of alternatives led the President to a reflagging agreement.

The rational actor model does explain the process that President Reagan used in making decisions, but cannot explain the complex interactions which occur between players in formulating U.S. foreign policy. The organizational model explains the reactions of the United States Coast Guard, the Maritime Administration, and the labor organizations which opposed using foreign crews and foreign vessels for the policy, but does not explain the basic agreement of the overall goals of the policy. The bureaucratic-politics model explains the centrality of the organizations, the State and Defense departments, the JCS, and the services, which all had a role in the decision. But it fails to account for the importance of individual ideologies in influencing the stance taken by Secretary of Defense Weinberger, Secretary of State Shultz, Admiral Crowe, Chairman of the JCS, and even President Reagan. The decision to reflag Kuwaiti oil tankers is best understood when the political-process model is applied, for nations are not unitary actors, they are not just a collection of organizations, and their organizations are not the most important determinant of foreign policy. The United States government is made up of people, who have shared values, work toward goals, conflict over the means to achieve their goals, have different degrees of power to influence policy

decisions, and finally, compromise to reach an agreement on a policy. The President is influenced not only by the agencies in his administration, but also by the Congress, public opinion, and his own personal ideologies. The end result is a very complex meshing of individual and organizational goals which produce foreign policy. The policy of reflagging Kuwaiti tankers was no exception to this political-process of policymaking.

We can see that there were many people involved in the decision - although in the haste to agree to reflag the tankers, a smaller circle may have been involved. In fact Reagan's beliefs and past losses of credibility in the region made the President's response predictable, and he was supported by the advisors who shared his ideologies and goals. Because of the system of shared powers set up in the U.S., a struggle for power did occur, especially between the Executive and Legislative branches. As the political-process model states, the debate rarely centered on the overall goal of the policy, or on the importance of the Persian Gulf to American interests. The conflict came over the means to achieving the goal. The presence of the military was the source of conflict between the President and Congress. Whether the War Powers act should be invoked was debated for nearly the length of the situation itself, and divided the Congress as well. Although the policy itself was not changed, there was an attempt to reduce the political confrontation between the President and Congress.

The political-process model also accounts for the effect of domestic politics on the making of foreign policy. The Iran-Contra affair and the Stark incident greatly affected public opinion towards the Reagan administration and the reflagging policy, and consequently affected the actions of the players in the case. The structure of Reagan's foreign policy making machine itself was affected by domestic politics long before the decision to reflag the tankers occurred.

Recommendations

A number of peripheral events which had an effect on the reflagging of Kuwaiti tankers could shed more light on the policy-making arena. A study of the Iran-Contra affair from the perspective of how the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency affect the policy-making of the U.S. would be interesting. The use of the NSC and the role of the National Security Advisor have changed with each administration, and their roles should be researched to determine their effectiveness, and whether or not Congress should have more oversight on the organization and the individual selected to be the advisor.

All of the issues of foreign policy-making reflect the nature of the U.S. Constitution, and the powers held by the different branches of the United States government. For a military officer, the knowledge gained by studying the U.S. government is instrumental in his understanding of the government he serves.

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